tion, I have spent that which I had? To this answereth the good Christian, saying I have bestowed my life time here in the works of mercy, by the grace which I received of my Lord Jesus Christ. Ninthly, what is that inscription, That which I gave, I have? Surely in all my temporall life I gave all my counsell, whole assent, and will which I had, to be the servant of God, and now it is in the good will and pleasure of God, that I shall remaine with him in the joyes of everlasting life in Heaven, unto the which Jesus Christ our Saviour bring us all:

Amen.

FINIS.

A

RECORD

OF

Ancient Hiſtories,

Entituled in Latine,

Geſta Romanorum.

Diſcourſing of ſundry Examples, for the advancement of Virtue, and the abandoning of Vice.

Very pleaſant in Reading, and profitable in Practiſe.

LONDON,
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B L

30.10.75

THE HISTORY OF *Gesta Romanorum.*

The Argument.

Mans soul is dearly beloved of God the Father. And yet for sundry good graces she is tempted of the Devil by three divers means, at three several Ages in this mortal life: if she resist and overcome the same, she is hereby adopted to the fruition of matrimonial joy in Heaven, with Christ the Son of God.

The first History.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor which had a fair creature to his Daughter, named Atalana, whom divers great Lords, and many Noble Knights desired to have to Wife. This Atalana was wondrous swift of foot: wherefore such a Law was made, that no man should have her to wife, except he could outrun her, and take her by swiftness of foot. It befel, that many came to run with her,

but could not overtake her. At the laſt there came a Knight named Pomeis unto her Father, and ſaid to him: My Lord, if it pleaſe you to give me your Daughter to Wife, I will run with her. Then ſaid her Father, there is a Law made, that whoſoever will have her to Wife, muſt firſt run with her, and if he overtake her not, he ſhal loſe his head, and if he overtake her, then ſhall I Wed her unto him.

And when the Emperor had told him all the peril that might fall in the winning of her, the Kt. voluntarily granted for to bide that jeopardy. Then the Knight provided him three balls of Gold againſt the running. And when they had began to run a little ſpace, the young Lady over-ran him: then the Knight threw forth before her the firſt ball of gold, & when the Damſel ſaw the ball, ſhe ſtoped, and took it up, and in the mean while the Knight gat before her, but that prevailed little, for when ſhe perceived it, ſhe ran ſo faſt, that in ſhort ſpace ſhe got before him again. And then he threw forth the ſecond ball of Gold, and ſhe ſtoped as ſhe did before and took it up, and in that while the Knight got before her again: which this young damſel ſeing, conſtrained her ſelf, and ran ſo faſt, that ſhe ſon had him at advantage again, and was before him: now by that time they were nigh the mark, whereby they ſhould abide, wherefore the Knight threw

threw forth the third ball before her, and she stooped down to take up the ball, and while she was taking up the third ball, the Knight got before her, and was first at the mark, and thus was she won.

The Moral.

By this Emperor is understood the Father of Heaven and by the Damsel is understood y soul of man, with whom many Devils desire to run and deceive her through their temptations, but she withstandeth them mightily, and overcometh them. And when he hath done his worst and may not speed, then makes he three balls of gold, and casteth them before in three ages of man, that is to say, in youth, in manhood, and in old age. In youth the Devil casteth the ball of letchery before her, that is to say, the desire of the flesh: nevertheless, for all this ball, oftentimes man overcometh the Devil by acknowledging of his sins to God, by hearty Repentance and amendment of life. The second ball is the ball of Pride, the which the Devil casteth to man in his manhood, that is to say, in his middle age: but this ball man oft-times overcometh as he did the first, but let him beware of the third ball, which is covetousnesse, that the Devil casteth to man in his old age, which is dreadful: for except a man may overcome this ball, with the other two, he shall

loſe his Honor, that is to ſay, the Kingdom of Heaven. For when a man burneth in covetouſneſſe, he thinketh not on Ghoſtly riches, (for ever his heart is ſet on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of prayers, nor of well doing, and thus loſeth he his Heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious blood: unto the which our Lord Jeſus bring us all.

The Argument.

As God allotteth divers men divers callings and eſtates of living in this World, ſo is every man tried by the rule of life and doctrine, whether his practice agree with his profeſſion, in profiting himſelf without prejudice to others, wherein if he ſo hold himſelf content, for ſuch a Son the heavenly Father hath planted a Tree of heavenly treaſure, in the life that ſhal be everlaſting.

The ſecond Hiſtory.

THere reigned ſometime in Rome a wiſe and mighty Emperor, named Anſelm, who did bear in his Arms a Shield of Silver with five red Roſes: This Emperor had three Sons whom he loved much: He had alſo continual war with the King of Egypt, in which war he loſt all his temporal goods, except a precious Tree. It fortuned after on a day, that he gave battel to the ſame K. of Egypt wherein he was grievouſly wounded, nevertheleſs he obtained the victory, notwithſtanding

ing he had his deadly wound: wherefore while he lay at point of death, he called unto his eldest son, and said: My dear and well beloved son, all my temporal riches are spent, and almost nothing is left me, but a precious Tree, the which stands in the midst of my Empire: I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the same tree, O my reverend father (quoth he) I thank you much.

Then said the Emperor call to me my second Son. Anon the eldest Son greatly joying of his Fathers gift, called in his brother, and when he came, the Emperor said: My dear son, I may not make my Testament, forasmuch as I have spent all my goods, except a Tree which standeth in the midst of mine Empire, of the which tree, I bequeath to thee all that is great and small. Then answered he, & said: My reverend Father, I thank you much.

Then said the Emperor call to me my third son, and so it was done. And when he was come, the Emperor said: My dear son, I must die of these wounds, & I have only a precious tree, of which I have given thy brethren their portion, and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I will that thou have of the said tree all that is wet and dry. Then said his Son: Father I thank you. Soon after the Emperor had made his bequest, he dyed. And shortly after the eldest Son took possession of the tree.

Now

Now when the second Son heard this, he came to him, saying: My brother, by what law or title occupy you this Tree? Dear brother, quoth he, I occupy it by this Title, my Father gave me all that is under the earth, and above of the said Tree, by reason thereof the Tree is mine? Unknowing to thee quoth the second Brother, he gave unto me all that is great and small of the said tree, and therefore I have as great right in the tree as you. This hearing the third Son, he came to them and said. My well beloved brethren, it behoveth you not to strive for this Tree, for I have as much right in the Tree as ye, for by the law ye wot, that the last Will & Testament ought to stand, for of truth he gave me of the said tree all that is wet and dry, and therefore the Tree by right is mine: but for as much as your words are of great force, and mine also, my counsel is, that we be judged by reason: for it is not good nor commendable that strife or dissention should be among us. Here beside dwelleth a King full of reason, therefore to avoid strife let us go to him, and each of us lay his right before him, & as he shall judge let us stand to his judgement: then said his Brethren, thy counsel is good, wherefore they went all three unto the King of Reason, and each of them severally shewed forth his right unto him, as it is said before.

When

When the King had heard the Titles, he rehearsed them all again severally: first, saying to the eldest Son, thus: You say (qd. the King) that your Father gave you all that is under the earth and above the earth, of the said Tree. And to the second Brother he bequeathed all that is great and small of that Tree. And to the third Brother he gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that he laid the Law to them, and said, that this Will ought to stand.

Now my dear friends, briefly I shall satisfie all your requests: and when he had thus said, he turned him unto the eldest Brother, saying: My dear friend, if you list to abide the Judgment of Right, it behoveth you to be letten blood of the right arm. My Lord, (quoth he) your will shall be done. Then the King called for a discreet Physitian, commanding him to let him blood.

When the eldest Son was thus letten blood, the King said unto them all three: My dear friends, Where is your Father buried? then answered they and said: forsooth my Lord, in such a place. Anon the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his breast, and to bury the body again: and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should be laid in the blood of the elder Brother,

brother, and it should lie till it had received kindly the blood, and then to be laid in the Sun and dried, & after that it should be washt with clear water: his Servants fulfilled all that he had commanded: and when they began to wash, the blood vanished clean away, when the King saw this, he said to the second son, it behoveth that thou be letten blood as thy Brother was. Then said he: My Lords will shall be fulfilled, and anon he was done unto like as his brother was in all things, and when they began to wash the bone, the blood vanished away. Then said the King to the third Son, it behoveth thée to be letten blood likewise; He answered and said: My Lord it pleaseth me well so to be. When the youngest brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as his two brethren were before, then the Kings Servants began to wash the bone, but neither for washing nor rubbing might they do away the blood of the bone, but it ever appeared bloody; when the King saw this, he said: it appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the bone, thou art his true Son, & the other two are Bastards, I judge thée the trée for evermore.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which bare a Shield

of

of silver with five red Roses, that is his body that was so fair, so clear, and more radient than any silver, according to the Psalmist: Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum, that is, he was more fair than all the Children of men. By the five red Roses we understand his five wounds which he suffered for mankind. And by the King of Egypt we understand the Devil, against whom he fought all the time of his life, and at the last he was slain for mankind. Nevertheless before his death, he made his Testament to his three sons.

By the first, to whom he gave of the tree, all that was under the earth, and above the earth, we understand such mighty men, and others of all estates in this World, as are not content with their callings, seek ambitiously the subversion of others, to magnifie and exalt themselves. By the second Son to whom he gave all of the tree that was great and small, we understand such worldly wise men, in this world, which in their subtilty attempt to win or lose all. By the third son, to whom he gave all that was wet and dry of the tree; we understand every good Christian Prince, Nobleman, Magistrate, or meaner person in every Common wealth whersoever, which (eschewing all ambition and covetousnesse) holding himself content with the providence of God, and in his own calling, laboureth truely

truely to do good unto all men; yea, though himſelf ſuſtain injuries, ſuffering now ſolace, then care, now riches, then poverty: yet receiveth all this thankfully, to have this precious Tree thus bequeathed unto them. This Tree is the Tree of Paradiſe, that is everlaſting joy which is given to us all if we take it thankfully. This every man obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them to go to the King of Reaſon, that is, unto the Father of Heaven who knoweth all things. The firſt Son was let blood, and in his blood the bone was laid. By this bone we ſhall underſtand our ſtrong faith in Chriſts merits, & by the blood, the lively and fruitful ſap of good works proceeding out of the ſame, which are rare things to be found in thoſe that ſeek their own private gain, who when they are let blood by the ſharp Lance of Gods Juſtice, and it be eſtabliſhed by Divine Predication, and made dry with the Sun of outward profeſſion, yet being waſht with the water of ſwelling Pride, Malice, Envy, and ſuch like, then the faith in Chriſts Merits, is as though we had not received it, and the lively fruitful ſap of good works hath no power to tarry upon it, but vaniſheth away. And thus it fared with theſe other two, the firſt and ſecond Sons: but the third Son being contrary unto the other in profeſſion and practiſe of life and manners be

be

he Magistrate or mean person, the bone of such a person will ever be firm of Faith, in himself and towards others. From such a mans bone the blood of lively fruits (to himself and all others profitable) will never be washed away with the water of wretchedness. But the more it is dryed in the Sun of true trial, the better it is: Such are the true Children of God, of whom our Lord speaketh thus: ye which have forsaken all things for me; that is, ye that have forsaken the way of sin, shall receive an hundred times more, that is, ye shall not only receive the tree of Paradise, but also the Heritage of Heaven. These other two are Bastards, because what they promised in their Baptisme, they wrought all the contrary through their wicked living, and therefore he that desireth to obtain the joyes of Heaven, must abide stedfastly in the profession and practice of good life and manners, and then by Christ he shall obtain the Tree of Paradise; Unto which he bring us, who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

The Argument.

God so loved sinful man, that he sent his only begotten Son to redeem him out of the captivity of the World, to rest with him in the joyes of Heaven.

The third History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometimes a Noble Emperor, named Diocletian, who loved ex-

ceedingly the vertue of Charity, wherefore he desired greatly to know what Fowl loved her young best, to the intent that he might thereby grow to more perfect charity; it fortuned upon a day, that the Emperor rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas he found the nest of a great bird (called in latin Struchio Cameli, in English an Ostridge) with her young, the which young bird the Emperor tok with him, and closed her in a vessel of glass, the Dam of this little Bird followed unto the Emperors Palace, and flew into the Hall where her young one was. But when she saw her young one, and could not come to her, nor get her out, she returned again to the Forest, & abode there three days, and at the last she came again to the Palace, bearing in her mouth a worm called Thumare and when she came where her young one was, she let the worm fall upon the glass, by vertue of which worm the glass brake, and the young one flew forth with her Dam. When the Emperor saw this, he praised much the Dam of the bird, which laboured so diligently to deliver her young one.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, which greatly loveth them that live in perfect love and charity. This little bird taken from the forrest, and closed in the glass,

Glasse, was Adam our Forefather, which was exiled out of Paradise and put into the Glass, that is, Hell. This hearing the Dam of the Bird, that is the Son of God, he descended from Heaven, unto the Forrest of the world, and lived there three dayes bearing with him a worm, that is, Man hood, according to the Psalmist, I am a worm & no man. This was slain among the Jews, of whose blood the vessel external was broken, and the Bird went out, that is, Adam went forth with his Dam the Son of God, and flew to Heaven.

The Argument.

A clean Spirit and undefiled Soul is the Daughter of God, so dear unto him that he bestows her not upon the rich man wanting wisdome, but upon the poor man that is wise, and liveth in his fear, which if shee have at any time transgress'd by frailty of flesh, then seeketh she for recovery of her health by the medicine of amendment of life: such a soul shall be espoused to Christ, and live with him in the World to come everlastingly.

The fourth History.

SOmtime reigned in Rome a worthy Emperor and a wise, which had a fair daughter and a gracious in the sight of every man. This Emperor bethought him on a day, to whom he might give his daughter in marriage, reasoning thus: If I give my Daughter to a Rich man, and he be a Fool, then is she lost, but if I give her to a poor and a wise

man, then may he get his living by his wisdome.

There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome, a Philosopher named Socrates poor but wise, which came to the Emperour and said, My Lord, be not displeased though I put forth my Petition before your Highness, ℔ Emperor said, speak on: then said Socrates, My Lord, ye have a Daughter whom I desire above all things. The Emperor answered and said: My friend, I shall give thee my Daughter to Wife on this condition, that if she dye in fellowship after that she is espoused to thee, thou shalt without doubt lose thy head. Then said Socrates upon this condition I will gladly take her to my wife. The Emp. hearing this, called all the Lords and States of his Empire, and made a great feast at their wedding. And after the feast Socrates led home his wife to his own House, where they lived in peace & healthsome time. But at the last the Emperors Daughter sickned to death almost. When Socrates perceived this, he said to himself, Alas and woe is me, what shall I do, and whether shal I flee, if the Emperors Daughter that is my wife should die, And for sorrow this Socrates went to a forrest there beside and wept bitterly.

Then while he thus wept & mourn'd, there came an old man having a staff in his hand

and

and asked him why he mourned. Socrates answered and said: I espoused the Emperors daughter upon this condition, that if she die in my fellowship, I should lose my life: now she is sickned to death almost, and I can find no remedy nor help, and therefore I mourn.

Then said the old man, be of good comfort for I shall help you if ye will do after my counsel. In this forrest be three herbs, if you make drink of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if ye use this medicinal drink & plaister in due time, without doubt she shal recover her perfect healthy. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used a while that medicinal drink and plaister, within short time she was perfectly whole of all her sickness. And when the Emperor heard that Socrates had so recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Moral.

Dear friends, the Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, his daughter so fair and so gracious is the soul, made to the similitude of God, which is so glorious in the sight of him and of his Angels, while that she is not defiled, but abideth in her own proper cleanness. This soul God would not give it to a rich man, but to a poor, that is, a man that is made of the slime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poor man, for why; every man cometh poor and naked into this world from his Mothers belly, every man takes his ſoul in wedlock upon ſuch condition that if ſhe die in his fellowſhip by deadly ſin, without doubt he ſhall loſe eternal life. Therefore O thou man if thy wife ſicken through frailty of fleſh, unto ſin, do then as Socrates did, go unto the Forreſt, that is, the Church of Chriſt, and thou ſhalt finde there an old man with a ſtaffe, that is, a diſcreet Preacher, which ſhall Miniſter unto thee theſe three herbs, wherein may be conſected the Medicine of thy recovery unto health. The firſt herb is acknowledging of ſin; the ſecond is repentance: and the third is newneſs of life, according to the wil of God: If theſe hearbs be uſed in a plaiſter, the ſinner without doubt ſhall receive his health, and his ſoul ſhall be delivered from ſin, and aſſuredly he ſhall have everlaſting life; Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

The Argument.

Many fooliſh Ideots of the world, which flow in abundance of worldly wealth and pomp, thinking they ſhall live here alwaies are laboured unto by the Preachers of Gods word, and admoniſhed of their momentany felicities, and prepare themſelves in beſtowing well their ſhort time here, that they may injoy the bleſſings of everlaſting felicity in the world to come.

The fifth Hiſtory.

SOntime there reign'd in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wiſe, named Frederick, who

who had one onely son whom he loved much. This Emperor when he lay at point of death called unto him his son, and said: Dear son, I have a Ball of Gold, which I charge thee on my blessing that thou anon after my death shalt give to the veriest fool thou canst finde. Then said his Son: My Lord without doubt your will shall be fulfilled. Anon this young Lord after the death of his Father, went and sought many Realms, & found many wretchless fools, but because he would perform his fathers will, he sought til he came to a Realm where the law was such, ỳ every year a new King was chosen who had the ruling of the Realm for one year onely, and at the years end he was deposed & exiled, into an Island where he finished his life in misery. When the Emperors Son came to this Realm, the new King was chosen with great honor, and brought unto his Regal seat with much musick and great reverence. And when the Emperor saw that, he came unto him, and saluted him reverently, saying: My Lord, lo I give you this ball of gold, on my Fathers behalf. Then said he: I pray thee tell me the cause why thou givest me this ball: Then answered he, and said: My Father charged me on his death-bed, that I should give this Ball to the most fool I could finde: wherefore I have sought many Realms, and have found many fools, but a more fool than thou

I never found: for it is not unknown to thée that thou ſhalt reign but a year, and at the years end thou ſhalt be exiled into ſuch a place, whereas thou ſhalt dye a miſerable death: wherefore I hold thée moſt fool that ever I found, for as much as, for the Lordſhip of a year thou wilt ſo wilfully loſe thy ſelf: and therefore I give thée this Ball. Then ſaid the King, Without doubt thou ſaieſt truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realm, I will ſend before me great treaſure, wherewith I may ſuſtain my ſelf from miſerable death, when I ſhall be exiled and put down. And ſo this was done: and at the years end when he was exiled, he lived there in peace and quietneſs, and afterwards died a good death.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the Ball, that is, worldly riches to fools and Idiots, who ſavour nothing but that is earthly. This Emperors Son, is a Preacher or diſcreet Miniſter, that travelleth about many Realms and Lands, to ſhew unbelieving men and fools their peril. The Realm wherein no King might reign but a year, is the world. For who ſo liveth an hundred years, when he dieth he ſhall ſeem to have lived

lived but the space of an year: therefore do as the King did while you be in power of life, send before you your treasure, that is, firm Faith in Christs merits, and the fruits of Gods Word, proceeding from the same; then certainly when we be exiled out of this World, we shall live in peace, and shall finde the mercy of God plentifully, whereby we shall obtain eternal life. Unto which bring us, he that for us shed his precious blood.

The Argument.

The evil disposed men of this world are here advertised of their greedy griping after the sweet temptations of the Devil, wherein such do rejoyce till death cometh suddenly upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of desolate darkness, due to their desert.

The sixth History.

Diocletian reigned in the City of Rome, in whose Empire dwelt a noble Philosopher, who by his Art set up an Image in the midst of the City of Rome, which Image stretched out his Arm, and his foremost finger, whereupon stood this posie written in Latine: Percute hic, strike here. This Image after the death of the Philosopher stood a long time, and many great Clarks came for to read the superscription that was on the finger, but none understood it: wherefore the people wondred much. At

last, a long time after, there came a strange Clark out of a far Country and when he saw the Image, he read the superscription, strike here. And then upon a day when he saw the shadow of the hand, he took a Mattock, and broke up the ground under the hand where ȳ shadow was according to the understanding of the superscription, and anon he found an house all of Marble underneath the ground, wherein he found so much Riches, so many Jewels, and so great marvels as he never saw before. And at last he saw a table ready covered, and all maner of things necessary thereto, set thereupon. He farther beheld and saw a Carbuncle in the Hall that lighted all the house. And against this Carbuncle on the other side, stood a man holding a bow in his hand, and an Arrow ready to shot. The Clerk marvelled much when he saw all these things, and thought with himself, that if I tell this forth, there will no man believe me, and therefore I will have somewhat of these goods in token thereof. And with that he saw a knife of Gold upon the Table, the which he took, and would have put it in his bosom, but then the Archer smote the Carbuncle and brake it, whereby the whole house was shadowed and made dark, which when the Clerk perceived wept most bitterly, for he knew no way to get out,

for

for as much as the house was made dark through the breaking of the Carbuncle. And the darkness above there for ever after. And so finished the Clerk his life there in that darkness.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Image thus standing betokens the Devil, which saith evermore, Strike here, that is, seek after worldly riches and not for heavenly treasure. This Clerk that digged with the Mattock, doth betoken the worldly wise men of this world, as evil disposed pleaders of the Law, crafty Attorneys, and other wicked worldlings, that be ever smiting what by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the world, and in their smiting they finde great wonders, that is, they finde therein the delights of the world, wherein many men rejoyce. The Carbuncle that giveth light is the youth of man, which giveth hardiness to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his Arrow is Death, which lays watch against man to slay him. The Clerk that took up the knife, betokeneth every worldly man, that coveteth ever to have all things to his will, Till death smiteth the Carbuncle, that is, the youth, strength, and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in the darknesse of sin, in which darknesse oftentimes he dyeth.

There-

Therefore ſtudy we to fly the World, and her vain delights, and then we ſhall be ſure to win everlaſting life, unto which Chriſt Jeſus bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally put in minde, that the Devil beſieging the World, our Champion Chriſt Jeſus is ready to take our quarrel into his own hand, who deſcending and ſaving us from the invaſion and circumvention of Satan, is yet accurſed for us as a tranſgreſſor, and is content to ſuffer death for our full Juſtification.

The ſeventh Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſomtime a mighty Emperor named Titus, who ordained in his days ſuch a Law, that what Knight dyed in the Empire ſhould be buried in his armour, and whoſoever preſum'd to ſpoil any Kt. of his Armour after he was dead, ſhould dye without any gain-saying, It befel after few years that a City of the Empire was in danger of the Emperors enemies, and was in danger of loſing, for none that were in the City could defend themſelves by any manner of policy, wherefore great ſorrow and lamentation was made throughout the City.

But at laſt within few daies there came to the City a young Knight well-favoured, and valiant in feats of Arms, whom the worthy men of the City beholding, and underſtanding his prowels, cryed to him with one

one voice: O thou most noble Knight, we beseech thee to help us now at our most need, for you may see this City is like to be lost: Then he answered and said: Sirs, ye see I have no Armour, but if I had, I would defend your City.

This hearing a mighty man of that City, he said to him secretly; Sir, here lived sometime a valiant Knight who now is dead and buried within the City, and if it please you to take his Armour ye may defend this City and deliver us from peril, and that will be honour unto you, and profit unto the City.

The young Knight hearing this, went to the Grave, and arrayed himself with the Armour: and after much fight obtained the victory, and delivered the City. Which done, he laid the Armour again in the Grave. But there were some men of the City who envyed him because he had obtained the victory, and accused him to the Judge, saying thus: Sir, a Law was made by the Emperor, that whosoever dispoiled any dead Knight of his Armor should dye, This young Knight found a dead Knight, and took away his Armor, therefore I beseech thee ℔ thou proceed in Law against him with equity & Justice, in giving him severe punishment for so offending the Law. When the Judge heard

heard this, he made the Knight to be taken and when he was examined of this his trespass against the Law, he said thus: Sir, it is written in the Law, that of two harms the least is to be chosen. It is not unknown to you, that this City was in peril to be lost, and had I not taken this Armour, I had neither saved you nor the City, therefore methinks you ought rather to honour me for this good deed that I have done, than thus shamefully to reprove me: for I am led as he that is ready to be hanged. Also good Sirs, another thing I may allege for my excuse: he that stealeth or robbeth violently, purposeth not to restore the thing which he stealeth, but it is not thus with me; for though I took the Armour of the dead Knight for your defence and safegard, when I had obtained the victory, I bare it again to the same place, and to the dead Knight, whose it is by the Law.

Then said the Justice, a thief that breaketh a house that he may steal and bear away such as he can finde, although he bring again that he hath taken, I ask of thee if that the breaking of the house be lawful or not? The Knight answered, sometimes the breaking of the house may be good, whereas it is made in a feeble place, which would cause the Master of the House to make his wall

wall stronger, that the Thèves after breake not by force the walls so lightly, for avoiding of more harm.

Then said the Judge, if the breaking of the house be good, nevertheless in that breaking, violence is done to the Lord of the house: And so though thou didst restore the Armour of the dead Knight, nevertheless, thou didst wrong to the dead Knight in taking away his Armour. The Knight said, I have told you, that of two harms the least is to be chosen, & that harm where through great goodnesse cometh, ought not to be called harm, it should rather be called good. For if a house within the City were on fire and began to burn, it were better that three or four houses thereby should be thrown to ỳ ground, than that they should be set on fire also, whereby all the City would be burned, right so, if the Armour of the dead Knight had not bèen taken, the City had bèen lost.

And when the Judge heard that he answered so well and so reasonably, he could give no judgment against him. But they who had accused this Knight, slew him: for whose death there was great wèeping throughout all the City, and his body was honourably buried in a new Tomb.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of

of heaven, & this City is the world, which is beſieged of the Devil and deadly ſin, and as many as were within the City, were all in peril to be loſt. This young Kt. that came to the City is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who had not the Armour of humanity, till he went to the grave, that is, the womb of the glorious Virgin Mary, by the annunciation of the Angel, ſaying, The holy Ghoſt ſhall light on thee, &c. Lo, thou ſhalt conceive and bear a Son. And thus in the womb of the Virgin he took the armor of the dead Knight, that is, ỹ manhood of Adam our forefather, & ſaved the city, that is, the world and mankind, by his bleſſed paſſion that he ſuffered on the croſs, and he put the armor again into the grave, when his bleſſed body was buried; but the citizens envied him, that is, the Jews accuſed him to Pilate, ſaying: If thou ſuffer him thus, thou art not Cæſars friend; we have a Law, and after the Law he ought to die Joh. 19. 21. And thus our Lord Jeſus Chriſt of his enemies was condemned to the death of the croſs, and after aſcended up to heaven, whither he wil bring us. Amen.

The Argument.

The fornication of the wicked worldlie men is here directed by the providence of God, and by his gracious favour, the ſinner is delivered out of thraldome of ſin, unto the libertie of life everlaſting.

The

The eighth History.

There reign'd sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wise, named Berold, who ordained a Law, that what woman was taken in adultry, her husband being alive, she should be cast into perpetual Prison. There was that time a Knight that had a fair Lady to his wife, who cõmitted adultry, her husband being alive, and was with child, therefore by the Law she was put in prison, where in short time she was deliverd of a fair son. The child grew up til he was seven years old, & his mother daily wept bitterly: which when ỳ child heard, he said unto her, O Mother why weep ye thus? and for what cause are you thus perplexed? Then said his Mother, O my swéet Son, I have great cause to mourn, and thou also, for aboue our heads are people walking & the Sun shineth in clearnes, and we be here continually in such darkness, that I can neither sée thée nor thou me, alas that ever I conceived thée. Then said the Son, such joy as you speak of, I never saw, for I was born here in this darkness, therefore if I had meat and drink enough I should live here all my life Therefore Mother weep not but be chearful. This lamentation that was betwéen the Mother & the Son ỳ Emperors Steward heard, that stood aboue their heads whereof he had great compassion, and went

to

to the Emperour, and kneeling besought him of his Grace, that the Mother and the Son might be delivered out of prison. The Emperor as a merciful Lord, granted that they should be delivered. Nevertheless, if they trespassed so in time to come, they should be punished with double pain. And after she was delivered she lived joyfully.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is Father of Heaven that made the Law, that what married woman, that is, what soul that is espoused to the Lord, & doth commit adultery, that is, doth worship strange Gods, should be cast into the Prison of Hell; therefore the sinful soul hath great cause to weep, for she is debarred from light, that is from the joys of Heaven. Her Son that desired meat and drink, are the wealthy wicked Worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the joys of Heaven, that while we may live and have all the solace of the world, we desire no other Heaven. The Steward that heard their Lamentation, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who knowing all the privities of our sorrowful and repentant hearts for our sins, besought the Father of Heaven for us, that we might be delivered from the prison of sin, and so come to everlasting Life. Unto which he bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Christ Proclaimeth the joyful Feast of Heaven, whereto the lame, that is the poor Preachers of the Gospel having their sight of knowledge in Gods Word, supported by the blinde Laity, and each mutually comforting other, they approach unto the proclaimed Feast of perpetual felicity.

The ninth History.

SOmtime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Pompey, who above all other things was merciful. This Emperor proclaimed throughout all his Empire a great Feast, and that poor & rich should come to the Feast, and whosoever came to that feast, should not only be well fed, but also he should have great gifts.

When the Herald had warned all manner of men to come to this Feast; at that time there were two poor men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind. Alas, said one of these men to the other, woe to us both, how shall we do? for the Emperor hath proclaimed a Feast, and whosoever cometh thither, shall not only be well fed, but also shall have great gifts, and I am blinde, and thou art lame, How shall we do? Then said the lame man to the blinde man, I shall give thee good counsel, if thou wilt do after me; I am lame and feeble, and may not go, nevertheless I can see, and thou art blinde, but strong: take thou me upon thy back, and bear me, and I shall direct the right way, and thus we shall both come to the Emperors Feast.

Then said the blind man let it be so, get thou on my back, and I shall bear thée, and guide thou me, and so they did, and came both to the feast, and received great rewards, and after ended their lives in peace.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Jesus Christ, that proclaimeth a Feast, that is, the joys of Heaven, unto the which joyes he calleth all mankinde, and forsaketh no man that will come unto him. This lame man betokeneth the poor Ministers of the Gospel which wanting worldly wealth, live by the Providence of God; And this blinde man betokeneth the Lay-men, who know not the right way to Heaven. It behoveth the blind man, that is, the Lay-men, to bear the lame man, that is, the Ministers of the Gospel, sustaining & feeding them with the duty of the Church: and the Ministers in Gods cause are bound to teach and to inform us in the way to Heaven, whereas we shall not onely have a Feast but also great reward and joy. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Heaven and Hell are here compared to two Cities, these Cities are two contrary waies: to Heaven (which is the City of all Heavenly treasure and felicity) is a narrow, crooked, craggy, and painful way, having three Enemies, the Devil, the World and the Flesh. To Hell (being the City or sink of sorrow and sadness)

a fair way, broad, plain, and easie, having three guides, that is, Pride of life, Covetousnes of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the Flesh.

The tenth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Folliculus, who was very wise and merciful in all his works. This Emperor builded in the East a Noble City, wherein he put all his Treasure to be kept. Unto this City the way was stony, full of Brambles and sharp Thorns, and three Knights were armed ready to fight with them that would come to that City. Therefore the Emperor ordained that whosoever overcame these knights, should enter the City, and take at his will of the Emperors Treasure. After that this Emperor did make in the North a City, wherein he ordained all manner of pain, sorrow, and tormenting for Malefactors, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and fair Lillies, and in their way were three Knights ever waiting, if any man came toward the City of the North, to serve him with all manner of delicates and necessary provision; And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that City, the custome was such, that the people would bind him Hand and Foot, and cast him into Prison there to abide the sentence of the Judge.

When this was cryed throughout all the

Empire, there were two Knights dwelling in one City, one named Jonathas, who was a wise man, the other called Pirrhus, who was a Fool, nevertheless there had continued betweēn them great love. This Jonathas said to Pirrhus: Dear friend, there is a common cry made throughout all the Land, that the Emperor hath made a City in the East, wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that City, shall take what he will of the treasure, therefore let us go thither.

Then said Pirrhus: Thy Counsel is good, let us go. The wise Knight said: If it be so that thou wilt follow my counsel, I pray the that faithful friendship may continue betweēn us, and in token of love thou shalt drink my blood, and I will drink thine, on this condition, that neither of us leave other in this Journey. The foolish Knight said it pleaseth me right wel, therefore they were both let blood, and each of them drank other blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their journey, and when they had gone three daies journey toward the City where their treasures was, they came to a place where were two waies, one sharp, and stony, and full of Thorns, the other fair and plain, and full of Delights. Then said the wise Knight to his fellow: Dear friend,

he

here are two waies, one sharp and thorny nevertheless, if we go this way, we shal come to a City that is so rich, and there we shall have that we desire. Then said the foolish Knight to his fellow, I wonder greatly at you, that you will speak such things, for I will rather beléeve mine eyes than your words. I sée here openly, and so do you, that here is a hard way, and full of thorns and as I have heard, there be thrée Champions armed in this way ready to fight against all men that go towards the City of the East, and therefore I will not go that way, but here is (as you may sée) another way plain and easie to walk in, and in this way are thrée Knights ready to serve us, and give all manner of things delightful for us: and therefore by this way I will go, and not by that other way. Then said the wise Knight, certainly if we go by that way, we shall bée led into the City of the North, wherein there is no mercy, but perpetual pain and sorrow, and there we shall be taken and bound, and cast into Prison. Certainly said the foolish Knight, this way is the ready way, and as I believe it is more profitable than ꝑ other way. Then went they both forth the fair way, and anon thrée Knights met with them, which received them courteously for one night, and gave them all manner of things that were

pleasant

pleaſant to them. And on the morrow, they took their journey forth toward the City, and when they were within the City, anon the Emperours Officers met with them, and ſaid: Friends, why came ye hither? inſomuch that ye knew the Law of this City is ſo cruel of long time heretofore: ſurely ye ſhal be ſerved now after the Law. Anon they took the wiſe Knight, and brought him, and caſt him into priſon, and after that they took the fooliſh Knight, and bound him faſt, and caſt him into a Ditch. Soon after it befel, that the Judge came to the City to give judgment on them that had treſpaſſed the Law, and anon all the priſoners were brought forth before the Judge, among whom theſe two Knights were brought forth, one from priſon, and the other from the Ditch. Then ſaid the wiſe Knight to the Judge: My reverend Lord, I complain of my fellow that he is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two waies, whereof the one led to the City of the Caſt, and the other to this City, I told him all the peril of this City, and the reward of that other City, but he would not believe me, but ſaid to me in this wiſe: I wil believe mine own eyes better than thy words, and becauſe he was my fellow, I would not let him go alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherefore he is the cauſe of my death.

Then

Then ſaid the fooliſh knight, I complain that he is the cauſe of my death: for it is not unknown to you all, that I am a fool and he a wiſe man, and therefore he ſhould not ſo lightly have followed my folly, for if he had forſaken this way, I ſhould have followed him, and therefore he is the cauſe of my death. Then ſaid the Judge to the wiſe Knight, becauſe that thou with all thy wiſdom, ſo lightly conſenteddſt and followeddſt the will of the fool, and his fooliſh works: and thou fool, becauſe thou didſt reject the good counſel and advice of the wiſe, and wouldeſt not believe him, I give Judgement, that ye both be hanged for your treſpaſſe: and ſo it was done. Wherefore all men praiſed greatly the Judge for his diſcreet Judgement.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is Almighty God, and in the Eaſt is the City of Heaven wherein is treaſure infinite: And unto this City is a hard way and full of Thorns, that is, the way of Repentance, by which way full few walk: for it is hard and ſtraight according to the holy Scripture, ſaying thus Arcta eſt via quæ ducit ad vitam, It is a ſtraight way that leadeth to everlaſting life. In this way are three armed Knights, that is the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh: with whom it behoveth us to fight, and to

obtain the victory before we may come to Heaven. The second City that is in the North, is Hell: and to this accordeth the Scripture saying thus, Ab aquilone ponetur omne malum: Out of the North cometh all Evil. Certainly to this City the way is plain and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights, wherefore many men walk by this way. The three Knights that give to every man going this way, what thing they please, are these: Pride of life, Covetousness of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh: in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they lead him to Hell. This witty Knight betokeneth the soul, and the foolish Knight betokeneth the flesh, which is always foolish and at all times ready to do evil. These two are fellows and knit in one: for either of them drink others blood; that is, they shall drink of one cup, either of joy or pain, which they shall have after the day of Doom.

The Soul chuseth the way of repentance, and in as much as she may, she stirreth the Flesh to do the same. But the Flesh never thinketh what shall come after, and therefore she goeth in the delights of this World, and flyeth the vertue of Repentance. And thus the Soul after death is cast into Hell, and the Flesh is cast into the Ditch, that is, into the

Grave.

Grave. But when the Judge cometh, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, at the last day to judge all mankinde; Then the Soul shall complain upon the Flesh, and the Flesh upon the Soul: But then the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemn the Soul, because she followed the frailty of the Flesh, and the Flesh because it would not believe the Soul. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh that we may obey God, and then we shall have eternal life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being possest of the Princely Territory of Paradise, was by the Devil provoked to sing against her Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the world exiled) lost that heritage: but by Christs blessed Death and Passion was restored to a more happy Heritage of everlasting Felicity.

The eleventh History.

There dwelt somtime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Frederick, which had no Childe but one onely Daughter, to whom this Emperor after his decease bequeathed all his Empire. This understanding an Earl that dwelt there beside, he came to this young Lady, and wooed her, and provoked her to sin all that he might: whereby this young Lady in short process of time inclined to the Earl, and this Earl anon lay with her, and defiled

defiled her: and after that, he drave her from her Heritage, & exiled her out of the Empire, wherefore ſhe made great lamentation, and fled unto a Realm there beſide, where ſhe daily wept and mourned.

It befel after on a day, that while ſhe ſate mourning by the high-way ſide, there came riding by her a fair young Knight upon a Horſe, who came towards her a great pace and very courteouſly ſaluted her, asking her the cauſe why ſhe mourned ſo ſore. Then anſwered ſhe, and ſaid: My Reverend Lord, I am an Emperours Daughter, deſcended of Royal blood, my Father is dead, who left me all his Empire, becauſe he had no other Heir. And after his deceaſe an Earl there beſide deceived mée, defloured my Virginity, and after that, he put me violently out of my Heritage, ſo that now I am fain to beg my bread from dor to dor, and this is the cauſe of my ſorrow. Then ſaid the Knight: Fair Damſel, I have great compaſſion on thy beauty and on thy comlineſſe: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I will fight for thée againſt the Earl, and I wil aſſure thée the victory. Then ſaid ſhe Alas good Sir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my ſelf; And I ask no more of thée, ſaid the Knight, but that thou wouldſt be my wife, and love no man ſo much as

me

me. Then said she: Reverend Sir, that I will do gladly, and more if I might. Then said the Knight: I will that thou do nothing for me, but if it fortune me to dye in the fight for thée, and obtain the victory, thou shalt take my bloody shirt, and hang it upon a beam in thy Chamber: and this thou shalt do for two causes: The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt, thou shalt wéep for me. The second is, that whatsoever man cometh to woe thée to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily run unto thy Chamber and there beholding my bloody shirt, think heartily within thy self thus.

The Lord of this shirt died for my love in battel, by which he recovered my Heritage. God forbid I should take any other man after his death. Then said she: Reverend sir, all this I shal fulfil by the grace of God. And when the Knight heard this, he allayed to fight against the said Earl, and obtained the victory, and the Earl was overcome and fled, and this young Lady was brought and received again into her Heritage. Nevertheless, the Knight was deadly wounded in that battel, whereof he died: but ere he died he bequeathed his bloody shirt unto this Damsel, desiring her to kéep her promise. When this young Lady heard of his death, she wept sore, for in his shirt was brought thus.

Think

Think on me, and have in minde
Him that to thee was ſo kinde.

Anon when ſhe had received this ſhirt, ſhe hanged it upon a Beam in her Chamber, and as oft as ſhe beheld it ſhe wept bitterly. It befel not long after, that the States of the Empire came to her, and deſired her to take an Husband, but then ſhe went to her Chamber, and beheld the blody ſhirt, and waxed ſorrowful, and ſaid oftentimes, woe and alas thou ſuffereddſt death for my love, and thou alſo recovereddſt again my Heritage: God forbid that I ſhould take any other man but thee. And thus ſhe anſwered every man that came to her: and ſo they went away diſappointed of their purpoſe, and ſhe ended her life in reſt.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, and this Daughter is the Soul of man, made to the ſimilitude of God: to whom he gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradiſe. But there came the Earl, that is, the Devil, and provoked her to ſin, when ſhe eat of the Apple, and ſaid to her thus: In what hour yee eat of this Apple yee ſhal be Gods. Wherefore we breaking Gods commandement were exiled out of Paradiſe, to live in this World in great wretcheneſſe,

as

as the Scripture ſaith: In the ſweat of thy face thou ſhalt eat thy Bread. But then came a fair young Knight and a ſtrong, that is, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who had compaſſion upon man-kinde, and taking upon him our fleſh and blood, gave battel to the Devil and overcame him: and thus wonne hée again our Heritage. Therefore let us do as this young Lady did, let us lay this bloody ſhirt, that is, the remembrance of the Paſſion of Chriſt on the Beam of our hearts, let us think how our Lord Jeſus ſhed his precious blood for us. And if any man, that is, if the Devil, or any other would ſtir us to ſin, let us think preſently on the paſſion of Chriſt, ſaying thus: I will take none other but thée, who haſt ſhed thy blood for me, and thus ſhall we win everlaſting life. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally advertiſed of honouring the Sabbath day: how for the redeeming of time, to be occupied in Ghoſtly Contemplation, is profitable to the Soul and Body. Alſo Preachers of Gods Word oftentime, for ſaying truth purchaſe ill will. If we beſtow our talents in the amplifying of our Faith, and furthering one of another with good works, we ſhall in time inherit the fruition of eternal life prepared for Chriſt's Elect.

The twelfth Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſomtimes dwelt a mighty Emperor named Apollonius, who ordained

a Law, that every man upon pain of death should celebrate the day of his Nativity. This Emperor called to them a Clerk that was hight Virgil, and said: My dear Master, there be many hainous offences done in my Empire contrary to the Law, therefore I pray thee, that thou by thy cunning wouldest make some craft whereby I may know who trespasseth against the Law privately or openly. Then said Virgil, My revered Lord, your will shal be done, anon this Virgil through his craft made an Image in the midst of the City of Rome, which denounced and told all the Emperors Messengers who trespassed against the Law, and who not. There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome a Smith that hight Focus, which by no means would celebrate the Nativity of the Emperor. It befel upon a night as the Smith lay in his bed, he thought upon the Image that accused many men before, dreading lest the Image would accuse him, wherefore he arose, and went to the Image, and said: I make a Vow to God, if thou accuse me I shall break thy head, and when he had said thus, he went home. The Emperor on the morrow following sent Messengers to the Image, (as before time he was accustomed) to know and understand who had trespassed against the Law. And to them then said the Image lift up your eyes and

behold

behold what is ingraven in the forehead. And when they looked up, they saw this peece written. Times be changed and men become worse and worse: for he that will say the truth shall have his head broken. Therefore go ye forth to your Lord, and tell him all that ye have heard and seen. The Messengers went forth and told the Emperor all they had heard and seen.

Then said the Emperor, arm your selves and go to the Image, and if that you finde any man that hath menaced or threatned to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto me. Then went the Messengers forth to the Image, and said to it: tell us the truth, if any man have threatned thee, and we shall revenge thee anon. Then said the Image; Take the smith Focus, for he is the man that will not honour the Nativity of the Emperor: Straightway the Messengers led forth the Smith before the Emperor: and there examined him why he kept not the day of the Emperors Nativity in Reverence and Honor, according to the Law? Then answered the smith, and said: Reverend Lord, I beseech you that you will hear mine excuse, & if I answer not reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall ask me, I will yeild me fully to your grace: then said the Emperor, I will hear thee, and that which is right, that I will do.

Then

Then said the Smith, I must have eight pence every day in the week, and that I cannot get without great labour, and therefore I may not keep that day holy-day more than other days. Then said the Emperor, why must thou have this eight pence? Then said the Smith, I am bound to pay daily two pence, and two pence I lend, and two pence I lose, and two pence I spend: Then said the Emperor, tell me more expressly of these eight pence; Then said the Smith, I am bound every day to pay two pence to my Father, for when I was young he spent daily two pence on me, which I am bound to pay him again for his sustentation: and two pence I lose on my wife. Then said the Emperor, why loosest thou that two pence on thy wife? Then said he: where saw ye ever a woman but she had one of these properties, either she was wilful and contrary to her Husband, or lost of complexion: therefore that I give her I lose and two pence I lend to my Son, wherewith he is sustained, that when I come to age and poverty he may pay me two pence again, like as I do my Father. And I spend two pence on my self in meat and drink and that is little enough. Then said the Emperor, thou hast answered wel and wisely. Not long after the Emperor died, and this Smith Focus was chosen to be Emperor, because

cause he spent his eight pence so wisely and so profitably, and thus he ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, which ordained by his holy Law, that every one should keep holy the Sabbath-day. This Virgil that made that Image is the Holy Ghost who established among us Preachers, to teach vertues and reprove vices, and they should not spare the Poor nor the Rich. But now if a Preacher should speak the truth against any man, he shall be threatned by the enemies of Christ, that is, by evil men that neither love God nor man. Wherefore the Preacher may say now a-daies, that posie which was written in the fore-head of the Image: Times be changed from good to ill, and Men bee daily worse: for whoso would speak the truth now adayes shal have his head broken. Therefore it is needful they be armed, that is, ought to be armed with vertuous examples of good life, and then they need not fear, because they have the truth of God to stand by them, according to the Apostles saying: If God be for us, who can be against us?

By this Smith Focus is understood every good Christian-man, who daily should spend his time in redeeming every hours travel

with ſome profit Corporal or Spiritual: and then ought he to be preſented before the Emperor: This Focus paid two pence to the Father, and ſo we ſhould pay to our Father of Heaven two pence, that is honour and love; For when we were Children of wretchedneſſe, and in bondage, Almighty God ſent down to the earth his Son to redeem us, according to St. John the Evangeliſt, ſaying; God loved the world ſo wel, that he gave his onely begotten Son for the Salvation of the World. Alſo this Focus lent two pence to his Son: that is, every Chriſtian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, true and unfeigned faith, and fruitful good Works and Deeds in our life, and he will repay us again at the day of Doom with his heavenly mercy, when Soul and Body ſhall be glorified, and that he is our Brother may be proved by the Text of Iſaiah, ſaying, A childe is born to us. This Focus loſt two pence to his Wife: his Wife betokens the fleſh, upon whom thou loſeſt two pence, that is, unlawful love and conſent to ſin, becauſe the fleſh is contrary to the Spirit, and is ever ſubject to ſin. This Focus alſo ſpent two pence on himſelf: by the firſt penny ye ſhall underſtand repentance, whereat the Angels in Heaven do greatly rejoyce; by the ſecond penny ye ſhall under-

ſtand

stand perfect perseverance in amendment of life: for he that abideth unto the end shall be saved. And he that spendeth well these two pence shal obtain everlasting life; unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being blinde through sin, and either by infirmity of frail flesh, or suggestion trespassing with evil and lewd company, though God of his mercy be favourable unto him in his life time by reason of the foresaid respect, yet if he accustomedly walk on forward in this worldly wickedness, his wilful blindness shal not excuse him, but accuse him in the day of Judgment, most grievously to have offended God, in abusing his mercy offered, and therefore the less worthy to have the reward of the simple soul, that repentantly and with modesty liveth to the fruition of everlasting bliss.

The thirteenth History.

Somtime in Rome dwelt a noble Emperor which among all other vertues loved best mercy: Wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blinde man should have an hundred shillings by the year, of his treasure. It befel on a day, that certain men came to a Tavern to drink Wine, and that these men had sitten in the Tavern three daies, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for the wine: wherefore the Vintner came to them and demanded money for his Wine. Then said one of the Drinkers, Sirs, the Em-

peroz hath made such a Law, that every blind man shall have an hundred shillings of his treasure: therefore let us cast lots among us, and to whom the lot falleth, let his eyes be put out, and so he may go to the Emperors Palace, and get an hundred shillings to discharge us. Now this counsel liked them well, so they cast lots; and the lot fell on him that gave the counsel, and his fellows immediately put out his eyes.

And when he was blinde, he went to the Emperors Palace, and asked an hundred shillings of the Steward, according to the Emperors Decree. Dear Friend, said the Steward, thou didst see with both thine eyes a while since, thou also understandest the Law amiss: for the Law is made for men that are blinde through infirmities, or by the will of God, but the other day thou hadst thy sight in the Tavern, and hast wilfully lost it. Therefore go to the Tavern again to thy fellows, and discharge what thou owest, for here getteſt thou not a Farthing. Then went this wretched man forth, and told his fellows of the Stewards answer, and with that came in the Vintner and dispoiled them of all their cloathes, and beat them, and thus drove them with shame out of the City: And so were they never after seen there.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Christ, who ordained a Law, that every blinde man should have an hundred shillings of his Treasure. The blind man betokeneth every sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the inticing of the Devil, the World and the Flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if he be inwardly repentant of his sins: that is, he shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying ye shal receive an hundred times more joy if ye repent and turn from sin, and all yee shall have everlasting life. These men that came to the Tavern to drink Wine, be sinners, who often times come to the Tavern of our Adversary the Devil, to drink of his carnal appetites, that is, they there consume and waste away all Spiritual Vertues, which they received at the Sacrament of Baptism. Where the Devil our enemy dispoileth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots, that is, they cast among them the custome of sin, and this lot of sin falleth on such as are unthankful and mercilesse: and such a man wilfully becomes wilful, a foul sinner like Judas, that betrayed our Lord without any sugestion or inticing. And therfore such men sin most grievously. When they come before the Steward,

that, before the Prelates of the Church, they can hardly obtain an assurance of Heaven, because they be not in the right way to leave their sin. Therefore let us study with all diligence to please God, that we may obtain everlasting life, which is laid up in store for all those that live modestly, looking for eternal salvation. Unto which bring us Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A certain faithful vow of love being made between the soul of every faithful Christian and Jesus Christ, we are to consider the merciful and gracious Covenant of God toward the faithful, and to be careful of this Covenant, and we are to study to perform our Vows, so as we at the prefixed day of Promise being undefiled, may thereby purchase the promised place of everlasting glory, prepared for all them that seek the glory of God, and their souls health.

The fourteenth History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Philominus, who had one only Daughter who was fair and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaes. There was also in the Emperors Palace a gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befel after on a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady, and secretly uttered his desire unto her. Then she said courteously seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, and truly I

that above all other I love you best. Then said the Knight, I purpose to visit the Holy Land, and therefore give me your Troth, that this seven years you shall take no other Man, but onely for my love to tarry for me so long, and if I come not again by this day seven years, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven years I will take no wife. Then said shee this Covenant pleaseth me well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, and then this Knight took his leave of the Lady and went to the holy Land. Shortly after the Emperor treated with the King of Hungaria for the marriage of his Daughter. Then came the K. of Hungary to the Emperors Palace to see his Daughter, & when he had seen her, he liked marvellous well her beauty and her behaviour, so that the Emperour and the King were accorded in all things as touching the marriage, upon the condition that the Damsel would consent. Then called the Emperour the young Lady to him, and said: O my fair Daughter, I have provided for thee, that a King shall be thy Husband if thou like consent, therefore tell me what answer thou wilt give to this. Then said she to her Father it pleaseth me well, but one thing dear Father I intreat of you,

if it might please you to grant mée: I have vowed to kéep my Virginity, and not to marry this seven years, therefore dear Father, I beseech you for all the love that is betwéen your gracious Fatherhood and mée, that you name no man to bée my Husband till these seven years be ended, and then I shall bé ready in all things to fulfil your will. Then said the Emperor, sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed, I will not break thy Vow, but when these seven years be expired, thou shalt have the King of Hungary to thy Husband.

Then the Emperor sent forth his Letters to the King of Hungary, praying him, if it might please him to stay seven years for the love of his Daughter, and then hé should spéed without fail. Herewith the King was pleased and content to stay the prefixed day.

And when the seven years were ended save a day, the young Lady stood in her Chamber Window, and wept sore, saying: Woe and alas, as to morrow my Love promised to be with me again from the Holy Land and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry me, according to my Fathers promise; and if my Love comes not at a certain hour, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I bear to him.

When the day came, the King hasted toward the Emperour to marry his Daughter, and was royally arrayed in Purple. And while the King was riding on his way, there came a Knight riding on his way, who said, I am of the Empire of Rome and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to do you the best Service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to rain so fast, that all the Kings Apparel was sore wet; Then said the Knight: My Lord ye have done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your house: Then said the King: Why speakest thou so? My House is large and broad, and made of stones, and mortar, how should I bring that with me my House? Thou speakest like a fool. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King smote his horse with his spurs, and leapt into the water, so that he was almost drowned. When the Knight saw this, and was over on the other side of the Water without peril, and he said to the King: Ye were in peril, and therefore ye did foolishly, because ye brought not with you your Bridge. Then said the King, thou speakest strangely, my Bridge is made of Lime and stone, and containeth in quantity more than half a Mile; How should I then bear with me my Bridge?

there-

therefore thou speakest foolishly. Well said the Knight, my foolishness may turn thee to wisdome. When the King had ridden a little further, he asked the Knight what time of day it was. Then said the Kt. if any man hath list to eat, it is time of the day to eat, therefore my Lord, pray take a modicum with me, for that is no dishonor to you, but great honor to me before the States of this Empire: Then said the King. I will gladly eat with thee. They sate both down in a fair Vine Garden, and there dined together, both the King and the Knight. And when dinner was done, and that the King had washed, the Knight said unto the King, My Lord, ye have done foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your Father and Mother. Then said the King, what sayest thou? My Father is dead, and my Mother is old and may not travel, how should I then bring them with me, therefore to say the truth, a foolisher man than thou art did I never hear. Then said the Knight, every work is praised at the end.

When the Knight had ridden a little further, & nigh to the Emperors Palace, he asked leave to go from him, for he knew a nearer way to the Palace, to the young Lady, that he might come first, and carry her away with him. Then said the King, I pray

thee

thée tell me by what place thou purposest to ride? Then said the Knight, I shall tell you the truth: this day seven years I left a Net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to me, and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and kéep it as a precious Jewel, if it be broken, then will I leave it: and when hée had thus said, hée took his leave of the King, and rode forth, but the King kept the broad high way.

When the Emperor heard of the Kings coming, he went towards him with a great company, and royally received him, causing him to shift his wet cloathes, and to put on fresh Apparel. And when the Emperor and the King were set at meat, the Emperor welcomed him with all the chear and solace that hée could. And when hée had eaten, the Emperor asked tydings of the King: My Lord said hée, I shall tell you what I have heard this day by the way, There came a Knight to me, and reverently saluted me: and anon after there fell a great Rain, and greatly spoiled my Apparel. And anon the Knight said: Sir, ye have done foolishly, for that you brought not with you your House. Then said the Emperor: what cloathing had the Knight on? A Cloak quoth the King. Then said the Emperor, surely that was a Wise

man,

man, for the houſe whereof he ſpake was a Cloak, and therefore he ſaid to you, that you did foliſhly, becauſe you came without your cloak, then your cloathes had not bæn ſpoiled with Rain. Then ſaid the King, when he had ridden a little further, we came to a dæp water, and I ſmote my Horſe with my Spurs, and I was almoſt drowned, but he rid through the water without any peril, then ſaid he to me, you did foliſhly for that you brought not with you your bridge. Verily ſaid the Emperor, hæ ſaith truth, for he called the Squires the Bridge, that ſhould have ridden before you, and aſſayed the dæpneſſe of the water. Then ſaid the King, we rode further, and at the laſt hæ prayed mæ to Dine with him. And when hæ had Dined, hæ ſaid, I did unwiſely, becauſe I brought not with me my Father and Mother. Truely ſaid the Emperor, hæ was a wiſe man, and ſaith: for hæ called your Father and Mother, Bread and Wine, and other victuals. Then ſaid the King: wæ rode further, and anon after he asked me leave to go from me, and I asked earneſtly whither he went: and he anſwered again, and ſaid: this day ſeven years, I left a Net in a private place, and now I will ride to ſæ it, and if it be broken and torn, then will I

leave

leave it, but if it be as I left it, then shall it be unto me right precious. When the Emperor heard this, he cryed with a loud voice and said: O ye my Knights & servants, come ye with me speedily unto my daughters chamber, for surely that is the Net of which he spake; and forthwith his Knights and Servants went unto his Daughters Chamber, and found her not, for the foresaid Knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damsel. And he went home again to his own Country ashamed.

The Moral.

Dear Friends this Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is everlasting life, which the Emperor had ordained for Kings, Knights and other men; The Knight that loved this young Lady, is every good Christian soul, which holdeth himself not worthy to come into the sight of God unto such joy, as the Apostle saith, The sufferings of this time are not worthy to attain to the glory that is to come. This Knight was seven years absent from his love: like as a good Christian all daies of his life should labour and travel in fulfilling the seven works of Mercy. By the King that came without a Cloak in the rain, is to be understood, some mighty men in this World, which have Cloaks to cover all their other cloathes. By this

this Cloak is understood Charity, as the Apostle saith: Charity covereth a multitude of sins: but many men have not this Cloak, wherefore they are wet with the Rain of Pride, Avarice and Letchery. This King also was almost drowned, because he lacked his Bridge, that is, perfect Faith: for as we see that no men passe over a great water, broad and deep without a Bridge, or some other thing that is able to bear him: Right so, without faith it is impossible to please God: for Christ saith, If ye have faith as a grain of Mustard-seed, then you may say to the Hills remove out of your places, and they shall remove. But many of us nowadaies have very feeble Faith, and therefore do suddenly fall into the Clay of desperation, and by deadly sins oftentimes offend God. Also this King had not brought with him his Father and Mother: By the Father which is cause of Generation, is understood Humility, without which there is no Vertue in any man, and thereto accordeth St. Gregory, saying, Hee that gathereth all other Vertues without Humility is like a man that casteth Dust into the Winde. His Mother betokenneth Hope: therefore hee that will obtain everlasting blessed life, must have the Cloak of Charity, the Bridge of Faith, and a Father of meek-

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nesse, and a Mother of Hope, as the Apostle saith.

Also this Knight went the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for he that will be saved must go a streight way: that is, the way of abstinence: Alms deeds, Charity and Repentance. Of the which way speaketh the Apostle. The way is straight that leadeth unto everlasting Life. But many men go the other way which leadeth to Hell, that is by the way of the fleshly lust: and such men go out of the way of everlasting Life. Therefore study we to walk the narrow way, that thereby we may obtain everlasting life.

The Argument.

By the History is figured, as appeareth in the Moral, the Soul of every good Christian, held of him as his Daughter: but being seduced, carried away and defiled by Satan her foul enemy; she is reduced by the help and valiant prowess of her heavenly Champion Christ Jesus, unto her former Habitation. Yet man being ungrateful to his Redeemer, forgetteth his duty, and for good rewardeth evil to his Champion Christ-Jesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law, as an Offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what he hath done for man and his soul, then he is with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ; he may obtain eternal Life.

The fifteenth History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor named Agias, which had retained unto him

him a Knight named Gerard, which was a worthy Warriour, nevertheless he was as a Lamb in the Emperors Court, but in the Field he was like a Lyon. This Emperor had a fair Daughter, whom the strong and mighty Earl of Peleſter carried by force away and defiled, which more displeased the Emperor than the carrying her away. Therefore hee called unto him his Counsel, and said: Dear Friends, the violence done to me in deflowring of my Daughter is not unknown to you, and therefore I purpose to give battel to the Earl: wherefore I pray you to be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battel. And they said: Sir, we be ready to live and dye with you in battel.

When the appointed day of battel came, they met on both sides, and a cruel sharp conflict was prosecuted on both sides, and almost all on the Emperors part was slain. And as the Emperor himself was forcibly assailed, the Knight Gerard put himself among the Enemies before the Emperor, and fought manfully, and so the Emperor escaped, and the Knight abode and slew the Earl, nevertheless the Knight had diverse wounds; Notwithstanding this, he abode still till the blood ran down to his foot. And when his enemies saw that the Earl was slain, they fled, and the Knight with his people followed on the

chase

chase till they came to the place where the Emperors Daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victory hee returned again to the Emperor. For the which victory, and re-obtaining of the Emperors Daughter, he was greatly praised of all people. Not long after it befel, that this Knight had a Sute in the Emperors Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperor, and prayed him meekly to be favourable to his cause: and furthermore desired him to do reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperour had heard him, hee called to him a Judge, and said: Sir, Our Will is, that you do all equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this, he cried with a loud voice: Alas, alas, who ever heard of such an Emperor? Thou wert (said he) in battel, where thy head should have been smitten off, and I in mine own person (and none other man) put my self in jeopardy for thee: and now thou hast assigned another man to be judge in my Cause: alas that ever thou wert born; and with that word the Knight put off all his cloaths, and shewed the wounds that he had received in the battel, unto all the men that were there present, and said: Lo, what I have suffered for thee, O Emperor; I did put no other man in my stead, and now thou assignest another man

in my cauſe. Soothly I ſay to thée, that I never ſerved ſuch a Lord before.

When the Emperor heard this, being almoſt confounded in himſelf, he ſaid: O dear Friend, all that thou ſayeſt is truth, thou ſaveſt me from death, thou didſt re-obtain my Daughter again, and for my ſake thou haſt ſuffered many wounds: verily it is right, that I in my own perſon come down and make an end of thy cauſe, ſo as may be to thy content, and to mine honour.

And then the Emperour laboured very buſily in this matter, and made thereof an end according to the Knights requeſt: wherefore all men greatly commended the Emperor.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor may be called every Chriſtian man, or elſe all mankinde, which had a fair Daughter, that is to ſay, the ſoul, made to the ſimilitude of God. This Earl betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, deflloureth by ſin the ſoul of man, through eating the fruit of the forbidden tree: wherefore all mankinde was in thraldom, till a ſtrong and valiant Knight came and put himſelf on the Croſſe to ſuffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Devil. For if that had not been, we had been all partakers of thraldome everlaſtingly: and this Knight

reduced

reduced and re-obtained the soul of man unto the Church, wherefore he suffered many great wounds in his body. And now this Knight, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ hath a matter to do among us, that is, to finde us perfect faith: wherefore hée calleth on us daily, that we should bée ready at all times, saying thus, in Apocalyps the third: Lo I stand and knock at the door, if any man will open to me, I will come in and sup with him. But many men do as the Emperor did, the which appointed the Knight another Judge than himself, for now adays there be some men that will do no repentance for the love of him, which assigned no other man but himself to fight for us. And therefore against unthankful persons, it shall be said thus. Lo, he suffered for us on the Crosse, dispoiled of all his clothing, and shewed to us all his wounds that he suffered.

Be we therefore thankful unto God for all his Graces, and be content that we may suffer for his Love some sorrowful repentance. For he that suffereth pain for the love of God in this Life, shall receive a hundred times more Reward in the Life everlasting. Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ bring all mankinde. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man is here warned to eſchew the pleaſant baits, and ſubtil crafts of the Devil, that ſhe yield not to his allurement leſt he get the vantage of this mortal courſe from her, and bereave her of her joyes, in the life to come.

The ſixteenth Hiſtory.

There dwelt ſometime in Rome a wiſe Emperor named Pompey, which had a vertuous daughter named Aglas. This Damſel had many endowments above all other women in that Empire.

Firſt, ſhe was fair and gracious in the ſight of every man: alſo ſhe was ſwift in running, ſo that no man might overtake her by a right Race. When the Emperor underſtood theſe two properties in his Daughter, he was right joyful: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man, poor or rich would run with his Daughter, ſhould have her to wife, with great riches, if he could over-run her, and come ſooner to the mark than ſhe: and if ſhe over-run him, and came ſooner to the mark than he, his head ſhould be ſmitten off.

When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earls, Barons and Knights, heard this cry, they offered themſelves one after another to run with her, but ever this young Lady over-ran them all: wherefore they loſt their heads according to the Law.

That

That time there was a poor man dwelling in Rome, which thought within himself, I am a poor man, and come of poor kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soever can out-run the Emperors Daughter, by any means, shal be promoted to great honour and riches: now therefore if I might over-run her by any manner of way, I should not onely be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poor man provided himself of three things, whereby he might win her; First, he made a Garland of red Roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich Girdle of Silk cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a Purse of Silk, embroydered with precious stones, and within the Purse was a Ball of three colours, and upon this Ball was written this Posey, Whoso playeth with mee, shall not be weary of my play. Then put he these three things in his bosome, and went forth to the Palace Gate, crying and saying: Come forth fair Lady, for I am ready to run with you, and to fulfil the Law in all things.

When the Emperor heard this, he commanded his Daughter to run with him. This young Lady went to her Chamber window, and when shee saw him, she despised him, and said: I have overcome many worthy Knights, and now must I run

with a Churl, nevertheleſſe I will fulfil my Fathers commandment.

Anon the Damſel arrayed her for to run with him. And at the laſt they run together, and within ſhort ſpace the Damoſel got far before him. When the Jugler ſaw this, he threw forth his Garland of flowers before her, And when the Damſel beheld and ſaw it, ſhe ſtooped down and took it up, and ſet it upon her head, and that while the Jugler went before her. But when the young Damoſel ſaw this, ſhe wept ſore, and for ſorrow ſhe threw the Garland into a ditch, and ran after him, and at the laſt ſhe overtook him, and lift up her right hand, and gave him a buffet, ſaying: abide thou wretch, it beſæmeth not thy Fathers Son to have mee to wife. And then this Lady did over-run him, and went before him a great ſpace. And when the Jugler ſaw this, he took the Girdle out of his boſome, and threw it before her. And when ſhe ſaw that, ſhe ſtooped down and took it up, and girded her therewith, and the while the Jugler gat before her again. Now when ſhe ſaw that, ſhe was vexed, and took the Girdle, and with her teeth tare it in three and then threw it from her: then ſhe ran faſt after him: and at the laſt overtook him, and then ſhe gave him a great blow, ſaying: O wretch, thinkeſt thou to overcome me:

and with that shee ran before him again. The Jugler was slie and subtle, and kept the Purse till they were nær the mark, and then he threw it before her, and anon shee stoped down and took it up, and opened it, and took out the Ball, and read the Posey: who playeth with me shal never be weary of my play; And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Jugler was before her at the mark. And thus hee won the Emperors Daughter.

The Moral.

Dear Friends this Emperor is our Saviour Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is the Soul of Man, which was made clean by the efficacy of Baptism, and was also swift in running, that is in vertue, while she was in her cleanneſſe, so that no deadly sin might overcome her. This Jugler that is so subtle and crafty, is the Devil, which studieth day and night to receive innocents. He provided him of three things. First, of the Garland, which betokeneth Pride: for why? a Garland of flowers is not set upon the arm, nor upon the foot, but upon the head that it may be sæn: so Pride would be sæn. Wherefore St. Augustine saith, when thou seest a proud man be not afraid to call him the son of the Devil; Do thou therefore as the maiden did, be angry at thy sins, and cast off the

Garland of Pride, into the Ditch of Repentance, and so shalt thou give the Devil a buffet, and overcome him. But when this Juggler, that is, our ghostly enemy, the Devil, seeth himself overcome in one sin, then he returneth and tempteth a man in another sin, and casteth before man the girdle of Letchery; And alas, there be many girded with this girdle of Letchery: against which girdle speaketh St. Gregory, saying: Gird we our loins with the Girdle of Chastity, for whosoever is girt with this Girdle, shall not lose the hope of life. Then casteth the Jugler (that is the Devil) the Purse with the Ball. The Purse that is open above, and close under, betokens the heart, which evermore should be close in the bottom against earthly things, and open above to Heavenly joy: and the two strings that open and shut the Purse, betoken the love of God, and of our neighbours: the Ball which is round and moveable, to every part of his difference, betokeneth covetousnesse, which moveth ever both in young and old, and therefore the Posey was true that was written on the Ball. Whoso playeth with me, that is with Covetousnesse, shall never be satisfied. Therefore saith Seneca: When all sins wax old, then covetousness waxeth young. Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this Ball of Covetousnesse

toulneſſe, and then without doubt we ſhall obtain through the merit of Chriſt, the bliſſe of heaven that neuer ſhall end. Unto the which bring us that ſhed his precious blood for us.

The Argument.

The Preaching of Gods Word and every good Prayer, is a ſweet ſounding melody in the ears of God, and hath a promiſed reward of God, yet there is now and then ſtirred up in us, ſome let thereof by our whiſtling Adverſary the Devil, and we are hindred for a time, until by the Providence of God, godly Preachers be ſent forth, which with the hook of Gods Word do win again our loſt felicity, and ſo recover the fall of ſuch Souls, as were ſeduced and led away, into joyful and perpetual fellowſhip of the bleſſed Angels of Heaven.

The ſeventeenth Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor & a wiſe, named Theodoſius, which loved greatly the Muſick of the Harp, & likewiſe the paſtime of Hunting. It befel upon a day as this Emperor Hunted in the Forreſt, he heard a ſwæt noiſe of a Harp, ſo that through the ſweetneſſe thereof, he was almoſt raviſhed of his wits, wherefore he ſought about the Forreſt to finde that Melody, and at the laſt he eſpyed at the end of the Forreſt a poor man ſitting beſide the water playing on a Harp full ſwætly. Then ſaid the Emperor: Good friend, proceedeth this Melody from thy Harp or no? The poor man anſwered and ſaid: My reverend Lord, I ſhall tell you the truth.

Here

Here beſide this water, my Wife, my Childe, and I have dwelt this thirty years, and God hath given me ſuch a gift, that when I play on my Harp, I make ſuch melody, that the fiſhes of this water come out to my hand, ſo that therewith my Wife, my Childe, and I have bẽn ſuſtained in great plenty. But alas, ſometime on the other ſide of this water there cometh a whiſtler, and he whiſtleth ſo ſweetly, that many times the fiſhes forſake me and go to him: therefore my reverend Lord I crave your help againſt this whiſtler. Then ſaid the Emperor, I ſhal give thée good help, I have here in my purſe a golden Hook, which I will give thée, take it, and binde it faſt to the end of a Rod, and put a Worm upon the Hook, then caſt thy rod into the water, and play upon the Harp, and when thou perceiveſt the fiſh to bite on the Bait, draw them up to the Land with that Hook, and then this whiſtling ſhall not avail. When the poor man heard this he reſoyced greatly, and did as he had taught him. And when this poor man began to play upon his Harp, the fiſhes came to the bait, and then he took them up with his hook, and lived thereby in better eſtate long time, and at laſt ended his life in peace and reſt.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our

our Lord Jesus Christ, which greatly delighteth to hunt the soul of mankind in the Forrest that is the holy Church. He loveth also the melody of the Harp, that is, he loveth much them that teach the holy Word of God. This poor man that sate by the waters side, betokeneth the Prelates of the Church, and the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought alway to be resident in their Charge, and not in the world, that is, they should not set their delight on worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of Holy Scripture, wherewith they may praise and honor God, and also therewith draw out of this world sinners. Therefore saith the Psalmist thus, Praise the Lord upon the Harp, sing to the Lord with a Psalm of thanksgiving; Psal. 98. 6. But now adays the Preacher may say, Alas, for when I preach and teach the Holy Scripture, the Devil cometh and whistleth so sweetly, that the sinners draw to him, and will not hear the word of God: but they turn themselves only to the delight of of sin. The Devil deceiveth mankind by divers waies.

First in the time of Preaching he maketh some to sleep, and them that he cannot make to sleep he causeth them to talk and clatter: and them that he cannot make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they cannot under-

stand

ſtand what the Preacher ſaith: and them that he cannot beguile by theſe means, he putteth into them buſineſſe, and cauſeth them to go out of the Church. Behold how many waies the Devil hath to deceive mankinde, and to hinder the Word of God. Therefore every Prelate, and every Preacher ought to have the golden Hook of Gods Word againſt this whiſtling, by which they may draw ſinners out of this World up to Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soul the Daughter of our Saviour, is right dear unto him, and though he be careful for the confirming of her in the ſtate of ſincere life, yet ſhe is ſeduced by the ſuggeſtion of the Fleſh, which being a grievous tranſgreſſor, is yet by earneſt repentance, and amendment of life, brought by the Soul unto dutiful obedience towards God and man, that thenceforwards continuing they together, may be partakers of everlaſting bleſſedneſs.

The eighteenth Hiſtory.

There dwelt ſomtime in Rome a mighty Emperor Named Ptolomeus, which had but one Childe, a Daughter, whom he loved ſo much, that day and night ſhe was guarded with armed Knights: and over theſe Knights he ordained a Controuler, to inſtruct them how they ſhould do. He ordained alſo a Steward for to guide his houſhold. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed,

en, he resolved y he would go visit the Holy Land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called to him his Steward, and said: My trusty servant, I purpose now to go see the Holy Land, and therefore I commit my Daughter to thy keeping, and charge thee, that she lack nothing, but that she have all manner of joy that appertaineth to such a Virgin. Moreover I leave to thy keeping five Knights, that be her Guard; and I charge thee that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I have with thee my Grey-hound, commanding that thou nourish and feed him as hitherto he hath been: and if thou fulfil all this that I have said, thou shalt at my coming again receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord, in all that I may I wil fulfil your command. Anon the Emperor took his journey toward the City of Jerusalem, and the Steward a long time kept wel the Emperors commands, and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day, that his Steward had espyed this young Lady talking alone in the Orchard, with whose love he was suddenly surprised; wherefore straightway, against her will he defloured her; and when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill language, and hated her more than ever he loved her before, and drave her out

out of the Palace: wherefore the Damsel
this means being driven to necessity a
great poverty, went from door to door, a
begged her bread. But when the Knigh
that were her keepers saw this, they repro
shamefully the Steward of this inhuma
deed. Then the Steward waxed wrath,
for great hate that he had in his heart,
spoiled the Knights of their goods, and dr
them from the Palace. And when they w
thus robbed and exiled, some for lack of l
ing became thieves, and some men killers,
that through this inconvenience th
wrought great harme.

Not long after there came tydings that
Emperor was arrived in that Land, com
homeward: And when the Steward he
this, he was greatly troubled and mover
himself, and said: It cannot be but I s
be accused for my trespasse that I have c
mitted against the Emperors commaundme
and he hath ever been my good merciful L
therefore better it were, that I go and
him with all lowlinesse and humility; and
cuse my self unto him, and ask him Me
than that any other should prevent me,
accuse me to my Lord for treason. Then
Steward straight put off his cloaths, save
hosen and his shirt, and took three Ropes
him in his right hand, and bare-foot, went

met the Emperor. Now when the Emperor has espyed him coming afar off in such manner he wondred greatly. And when the Steward was come so nér that hé might speak to the Emperor, he fell down on his knées and saluted him reverently: Then said the Emperor, what is befallen thée, that thou métest me after such a sort; for in that thou art my Steward, thou shouldest have met me with a great company of noble Knights. Oh my Lord, quoth he, there is a heavy chance befallen me, for which it behoves me to mét your Highnesse thus. Then said the Emperor what chance is befallen thé? My Reverend Lord, quoth he, it behoves you first to ask me, why I bring with me these thrée ropes. Then said the Emperor, why beatest thou these thrée Ropes in thy hand? Then answered the Steward, and said: This first rope I bring with mé to binde my hands and féet so hard, till the blood burst out on either syde, for that I have well deserved: the second Rope I bring with me, to draw me at the Horse tail upon the pavement, till my bones be bare without flesh, for that it is but due to me for the great treason I have done against you. The third Rope I have brought is to hang me with, upon an high Gallows, so long till that the Birds light on my head, and on my body, féed themselves

on

on my flesh, for these things are due to such Trespassers & breakers of the Law as I am. Yet Oh my Reverend Lord have mercy on me, for I dare not acknowledge my trespass, until I have obtained your pardon. Then said the Emperor, I see in thee great contrition, therefore tell me thy trespasse, and surely thou shalt finde Mercy and Grace. Alas, alas, then said the Steward, I have defiled thine only Daughter, and have driven her out of the Palace, so that now in great necessity she beggeth from dor to dor, I have also dispoiled thy Knights of all their goods, and now some of them in regard they lack living, become thieves and robbers, and some, men-killers, and the Controuler of the Knights I have slain, but I fed thy Grey-hound with the best meat as long as I might, and tyed him with a chain, yet at the last he brake his chain, and went his way, so that now he runneth about the Countrey.

When the Emperor heard this, he was sore astonished, and said: Hast thou deflowred my Daughter, whom I loved so well, and also dispoiled my Knights, and slain their Controuler; and the Grey-hound, which I loved so well, of whom I gave thee charge, is he gone also? Surely, were it not that I had forgiven thee, and that thou hast humbled thy self so much, I would have put thee to

the

the vilest death that could be thought: notwithstanding depart hence forthwith, and bring again my Daughter, that thou maist marry her, and if any harm hereafter befal to her, through thy default, then will I double thy punishment. Also bring again my Knights and restore to them their goods, and set them in their state and offices as they were before. Also seek diligently for my Grayhound, till thou find him, and make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there may be no fault found. Now when the Steward heard this, he bowed down with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperor for his great mercy, and then he went forth, and sought diligently through all the Empire, until he found the Emperors Daughter, and the Knights, and the Grayhound, and brought them home again. And after he had married the young Lady, and restored again the Knights goods, he ended his life in peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. His Daughter betokeneth the Soul of man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The five Kts. are the five wits armed with the vertue of Baptism, for the preservation of the soul. The Controuler of the Knights is Reason, which ought to rule the Wits. The grayhound is the flesh of man:

and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath given a life and soul to kéep, under pain of losing everlasting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembering what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his Soul with sin, and repelleth her from her Palace of Heaven, & then wandreth she from dor to dor, that is, from sin to sin. Hé dispoileth these five Knights of their gods, that is, the five Wits, or rather gracious Vertues, taking away the natural light from their eyes, giving them bad Counsel, also moving their ears to listen unto slander and backbiting, and so forth of all the other Wits; thus some be made théeves, and some man-killers. The Master of these five Wits is slain, whensoever man is ruled by Will, and not by Reason. The Grayhound, that is the Flesh, wherein a man delighteth, was fed and bound with a Chain of Reason, but breaking out, full oft doth much harm.

The coming again of this Emperor from the Holy Land, betokens the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ at the day of Dom to judge all mankind. Wherefore let us as þ Steward did, accuse our selves of our sins first, lest the Devil and the World accuse us, then it is to late to ask Mercy: therefore put we off our cloathes betime, that is, our sinful life, and take we three Ropes in our hands. The first

Rop

Rope that should binde our hands and feet, betokeneth the Rope of true Repentance, which not onely ought to binde our hands and feet, but also our heart within us, and our outward conversations, in such austerity of life, that is, that sin might void it self. Hereto accordeth Ezekiel saying thus: Whensoever the sinful man doth repent himself, he shall be forgiven. The second Rope for to draw the Trespasser, is acknowledging of our Sins, which would draw us from the beginning of our life, unto our lives end, by a perfect reconciliation of our selves to God and man, unto the time that the flesh was fallen to the bones, that is, till the lust of the flesh be turned away by the stones of repentance. For even as the stone by nature is hard, right so the way of repentance ought to be hard. The third Rope that should hang the fellon, is the rope of amendment of life: for it is written in Holy Scripture, There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that turneth unto the Lord in time, than over ninety and nine just persons.

Like as the Steward brought again the Emperors Daughter, so it behoveth us to seek about by a fruitful faith, until we finde again our lost soul, and to bring her again to the Church, to rule well our five Wits, to feed our Gray-hound we should, and make

our life ſo clean and pure, that we fall not again to ſin, for fear that it fortune to us worſe, and that we have no leiſure to aſk mercy again at our needs; and if we fulfil all this truely unto our lives end, without doubt we ſhall obtain everlaſting life. To the which our Lord bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The violating of our innocency in not imitating the Law of God, here deſcribed, which being adjudged after the Law, is death, but by the merits of Chriſt our Saviour, we obtain Salvation.

The nineteenth Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a mighty Emperor and a wiſe, named Enſenne, who ordained a Law, that whoſoever raviſhed a Virgin, ſhould be at her diſcretion, whether ſhe would put him to Death, or would take him to her Husband.

It befell after that a man raviſhed one night two fair Maidens: the firſt Damſel which he raviſhed, deſired that he ſhould dye, but the ſecond deſired him to her Husband. The Raviſher was taken and led before the Judge, that he might ſatisfie both theſe Damſels according to the equity of the cauſe. The firſt Damſel deſired his death according to the Law: then ſaid the ſecond, I deſire to have him to my Husband: and like as thou haſt the Law for thee, ſo in like caſe I have for me, and alſo my petition is much better than yours, for

for it is more charitable: therefore methinks in my reason, that the Judge should give sentence to the favour and furtherance of my desire. When the Judge heard the mercy of the second Damsel, he gave judgement that hee should take her to wife, and so it was done.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, the Ravisher betokeneth every sinner, which ravisheth the Holy Commandments of God by sin, for the Devil can never overcome man, except he be suffered by the will: For St. Augustine saith, It is not sin except it be voluntary. The ravisher also is called before the Justice, when the Soul is departed from the Body: and anon, the first Damsel (Innocency) laid against the sinner, that he ought to dye everlastingly by the law of righteousness: But the other Maid (that is, Christs merits) alledged for him, how the mercy of God ought to help by hearty Repentance, and acknowledging of sins, which is the high way to everlasting life. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Mother and the Childe of Grace, and of the Reprobate is here declared, and set forth: but which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be damned, is not yet revealed to the World, until the last and dreadful day of Judgement.

The twentieth Hiſtory.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, and a rich, named Lypodus which tok to wife a fair Virgin and a gentle, the Daughter of the King of Aſſyria. This young Lady conceived and bare him a Son, and in the birth ſhe died: not long after her deceaſe the Emperor married another Wife, and had by her a Son: and immediately after the ſecond Childe was born, he ſent them both into a ſtrange Land, there to be brought up. Now when the Children had been there long, the Empreſſe ſaid: My reverend Lord, ten years be now fully expired ſince I bare my Son, and yet I never ſaw him but once, and that was the firſt day of his birth, therefore I beſeech you my Lord, to ſend for him, to the end, that I may once reioyce me in his ſight. Then ſaid the Emperor, I have another child by my firſt wife, and if I ſend for thy Son, then muſt I ſend for them both: notwithſtanding, at the Empreſſes requeſt he ſent for them both. And when they were come, they were of paſſing feature, and well trained up, & ſo paſſing like in all things that hardly the one might be known from the other, but the Father knew the difference.

Then ſaid the Mother of the ſecond child My Lord, I pray you tell me which of theſe is my Son. Then the Emperor called to him the

that Son that he begat on his first Wife. When the Empresse heard this, she gave all care to nourish him, and neglected the other Childe. Now when the Emperor saw this, he said: Truely I deceived thee: Without doubt this is not thy Son, but one of them two is thy Son. Then said the Mother, My Lord, I most earnestly entreat you, that you would tell me without dissembling, which of them is my Son. The Emperor answered and said, certainly, I will not tell you, until they be both come to mans estate, and this is my reason: First, I told you that this was your Son, and you cherished him, and forsook that other: and when I told you that this was your Son, then you slightly regarded the first, and cherished the second. Therfore my desire is, that thou cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Empress heard this, she cherished them both alike. And when they were both at age, the Emperor made a great Feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her Son. Then rejoyced the Empress greatly, and when she had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperors Sons betokeneth those that be chosen to everlasting life, and those that be not chosen. The

Mother of them is the Providence of God, & nourisheth them both: therefore our Lord will not that his Providence should let the world know which be chosen, and which be not chosen: For if she knew that, then would she love the one and hate the other, and so Charity among us would be overthrown, and we should live in discord and strife: but Truth at the day of Judgement shall tell to us, which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be damned. Therefore pray we in this world, that we may come to the everlasting Feast in Heaven. Unto the which God bring us all.

The Argument.

The ungodly of this world will not take any pains to live vertuously, and yet oftentimes they are enriched for the most part with the riches of Fortune, but they are not careful of the reward laid up for the righteous in Heaven, neither do they fear the torments of Hell appointed for the Reprobates.

The 21. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor, named Polinus, which had three Sons whom he loved much. It befell upon a day when this Emperor lay upon his bed, he bethought him to which of his Sons he might give his Empire after his decease. Then called he to him his three Sons, and said: which of you is most sloathful, he shall have mine

mine Empire after my decease. The first Son answered and said: the Empire by reason should be mine, for I am so loathful, that if my foot were in the fire, I had rather it should be burnt, than I would take it out. Then said the second: I am (quoth he) more fit for the Empire than thou, for though there were a Cord about my neck wherewith I should be hanged, and if I had a sharp Sword in my hand, for very sloth I would not once put forth my hand, to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two Brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himself, thus: I ought to be Emperor before you both, for I excæd you in sloth, and I will prove it thus: I lie upright in my bed, and there droppeth water upon mine eyes, and for very sloth I will not move my head: neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my self. When the Emperor heard this, he bequeathed his Empire unto the youngest, as to the slothfullest of the Brethren.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Devil, which is the Lord and Father over the ungodly in this world. By the first Son is understood, a man that chanceth into evil company, by which he falleth into misdemeanour, and had rather be burnt in the fire of sin than depart from them. The

second

ſecond Son betokeneth him that knows himſelf to be faſt bound with the bond of ſin, wherewith he is to be hanged on the Gallows of Hell, and is ſo ſlothful, that he will not cut it away with the Sword of Repentance. By the third Son is underſtood a man that hears of the joyes of Heaven, and the pains of Hell, yet will not move himſelf to the right nor to the left ſide to forſake his ſins, for fear of eternal pain: ſuch a man without doubt, for his ſloth ſhal receive the Kingdom of Hell, From which keep us our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soul as a Captain General, with his Forces of Armed Vertues, fight againſt a ſtrong City, the World, wherein is the Caſtle of Vanity, and in that are poyſoned Forces of ſin, as mortal enemies of mankinde, againſt whom well to fight, is the means to obtain the Victory, and triumph everlaſtingly.

The two and twentieth Hiſtory.

ALexander the mighty Emperour ſometime ruled, who beſieged a City of the King of Egypt with a great Hoaſt, nevertheleſs, this Emperor loſt many worthy knights without any hurt or ſtroke. And thus from day to day his people dyed ſuddenly, whereat this Alexander wondered greatly, and was ſorrowful therefore in his minde, he called unto him his wiſeſt Philoſophers that might be found, and demanded of them why his People

dyed

dyed thus suddenly without any wounds? The Philosophers answered and said: My Lord, it is no wonder, for upon the walls of that Castle within the City is a Cockatrice, through whose sight your men dye, for they are infected with a venome that cometh from her eyes, and thereupon they dye.

Then this Alexander asked if there were any remedy against the Cockatrice. The Philosophers answered, and said: My Lord, there is good remedy, for if it please you to set up a large Mirrour of clear glasse over against the Cockatrice, betwéen your Hoast & the Wall of the City, when the Cockatrice beholdeth her self in the Mirrour, the deadly nature of the venomous sight shall return again to her self, and thus she shall dye, and your men shall thereby be saved. Then the Emperor did as the Philosophers counselled him, and set up forthwith a large Mirrour of excellent clear Glasse, and thus was the Cockatrice slain, and the Emperor with his Hoast made an assault on the City, and obtained the victory.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, which ought to gather an Hoast of Vertue, for without Vertue no man can fight Spiritually. The City against which ye shall fight, is the World, wherein

wherein there is an high Caſtle, that is, Vanity of Vanities, and all is but vanity. In this Vanity ſtandeth the Cockatrice, that is, pride of life; deſire of the eyes, the luſt of the fleſh, wherefore this pride infecteth ſo many, that they dye in ſin everlaſtingly: wherefore the beſt remedy againſt this pride, is the conſideration of our uncleanneſſe, how we came naked into the world. And if it bee asked why a man is proud, it may be anſwered thus: for default of cloathing himſelf with vertues: what ſhall we do when we dye thus ghoſtly, but let up a pure mirrour of conſcience that by that conſcience, we may conſider our ſlidings, and our brittleneſs, as in a glaſſe, where we may ſee our default? And if we do thus, without doubt the Cockatrice, that is pride of life, deſire of the eyes, and luſt of the fleſh, ſhall be utterly deſtroyed, and we ſhall obtain the victory of this worldly City, and by Chriſts merits win everlaſting life. Unto the which he bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being converſant in the body with the Fleſh, ſhe ſeeketh by ſiniſter means to overthrow the Soul with her unclean luſts after the World, where though the Soul for a time ſuffereth ſhipwrack of worldly felicity, yet the Lyon of the Tribe of *Juda* is of power, not onely to comfort her in neceſſity, and to make her to repoſſeſs her former eſtate in the world to come.

The

The 23. History.

A Mighty Emperor sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a fair Lady, whom a young Knight loved, and had to do with her as oft as him list. It befel on a night, that this Emperor bethought him in his Bed, to visit the City of Jerusalem, where without any more delay hée ordained all things necessary for his journey, and taking his leave of the Empresse, and of the States of the Empire, went towards the said City.

When the Empresse heard this, she took the Master of the Ship aside, and said: If thou wilt consent to me, and be true, ask of mée what thou wilt, and thou shalt bée sure to have it. The Master of the Ship was corrupt with Covetousnesse, and said: O my dear Lady, whatsoever thou command me, I will without fail fulfill it, so that thou wilt reward me for my labour. Then said the Empresse, before thou dost ought for me, I will give thée what ever thou desirest, so that thou wilt swear to be true to me, and kéep my counsel. Then the Master of the Ship sware to be true to her.

Then said the Empresse: My Lord goeth with you in your ship, therefore when he is in the midst of the Sea, cast him over-board, that he may be drowned, and thou shalt have what thou

thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Master of the Ship swore a great Oath, and said: By the great God Jupiter, after he cometh once within my Ship, you shall never see him more. Then the Lady gave him as much gold as he would have, and he went to his Ship.

And within short time after the Emperor took shipping, and when it was in the midst of the Sea, the Master of the Ship took the Emperor and threw him over-board into the Sea. When the Master returned again, he told the Empress how he cast the Emperor into the Sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperor that was cast into the Sea, had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Island in the Sea, & when he was faint, and like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his help. At length he came into a little Island, wherein was nothing but Lyons and Leopards, and such other beasts as swam thither from other Lands. When the Emperor had got to Land in that Isle, he espyed a young Lyon fighting with an old Leopard, and the Lyon was too weak, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperor had great compassion on the Lion, and drew out his Sword, and forthwith slew the Leopard. The Lyon from that time forth followed the Emperor, and would not leave him for any thing, but every

every day ẏ prey that ẏ Lyon took, he brought and laid at the Emperors féet, and the Emperor smote fire with a flint stone, and broiled the body of the Beasts in the skin: and thus was he fed by a long season. At length, as he walked by the Sea-shore, hée saw a goodly Ship come sailing by, with a high voice he cryed. And when the Ship-men heard the voice, they wondred what it might be, wherefore they sailed toward him: and when they were come near him, he said: Good friends take me with you, and I shall pay you a good fraught. So they took him into their Ship, and the Lyon followed him, swiming in the Sea after the Ship: and when the Lyon was néer drowned, the Ship-men had pity on him, and took him into the Ship. Now when the Emperor came to land, he payed his fraught, and went forth with the Lyon till he came near his own Palace where hée heard Trumpets, and all other Musick, and as he marvelled what it might be, there came from the Palace a Squire toward him, that he knew, but the Squire knew not him: To whom the Emperor said thus: Good friend, I pray thée tell me what is the cause of this Melody? The Squire answered and said, the Empress is married this day, and all the States of the Empire are at the Feast, and therefore they make such Melody. Then

said

said the Emperor to the Squire: where is her Husband, that was the Emperor before? The Squire said, that he went to the Holy Land, and was drowned by the way. Then the Emperor said: Sir, I pray you tell the Empress and the Lord that shall be her Husband, that (I to please them) will shew their Majesties rare sport with my Lyon. The Squire granted to do his errand, and went in and told his Lord and Lady, that a goodly old man was at the Gate, that would shew them sport with his Lyon, Then said the new married Lady, bring him in, he perchance may deserve meat for his play. When the Emperor with his young Lyon was brought in, the Lyon without any setting on, ran upon the young Knight that was newly married, and slew him, and when he had so done, he ran upon the Empress also, and devoured her to the bones, before all the Lords of the Empire. And when the Nobles saw this, they were greatly agast, and began to flee. But the Emperor with his fair speech perswaded them, and said: Lo, this is the Vengeance of God, for this my Wife, hath used Adultery long time with this Knight that lyeth dead, and she practised my death with the Master of the Ship, and thereupon he threw me into the Sea, but God saved me from death; and because I helpt once this

Lyon

Lyon at a need, he never forsook me since, and now, as ye all see, when I came into the Palace, without provoking of me he hath slain both the Adulterers, and therefore understand ye for truth, that I am your Emperor. Now when they heard this, they looked more seriously upon him, and discerned him to be their Emperor, and greatly rejoycing, praised God for that miracle, which had saved their Lord and Emperor. And they lived together a long time in Peace.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, by this Emperor we may understand every Christian man that purposeth to visit the City of Jerusalem, that is, to get everlasting life, through Faith. But his wife, that is, the wretched flesh, murmureth against the soul, and loveth better an adulterer, that is deadly sin, than her Husband. This Emperor went into a Ship, taking his journey towards the City of Jerusalem, that is, he went to the Church of God, which is the way to God: but the Wife, that is, fleshly men, accused him to the Master of the Ship, that is, to the Prelates of the Church, for great Reward which oftentimes do blind the sight of many Justices, whereby many perfect Men be cast out of the ship into the sea, to be drowned, that is, out of the Church into the Sea of this world. But what shal we do then

that is thus caſt to be troubled in this world certainly, this ought he to do: let him learn to ſwim, that is, let him put all his hope in God, and by his Grace he ſhall come to an Iſland, that is the Religion of heart, and then he ſhal love ever the better to kéep himſelf ont of this World and therefore St. James ſaith, A pure Religion and undefiled before God even the Father is this, &c. And he that is in this Religion ſhall find a Lyon, whom he behoveth to have againſt the Devil. This Lyon is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt that came of the Tribe of Juda, who fighteth ever againſt the Devil, and if a man hath holp this Lyon, that is, hath ſerved God againſt his enemies at any time, he may truſt wel, that he wil not forſake him at his néed, according to the Pſalmiſt, ſaying: I am with him in trouble. By this Lyon thou muſt tame thy wife, that is thy fleſh, with Repentance, and ſlay thy ſin, and then without doubt thou ſhalt obtain the Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us all our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man eſpouſed to Chriſt in Baptiſm, yet dyeth by means of ſin, leaving behinde, her Son called Reaſon, or rather the Word of God, which ſearcheth the diſeaſe of man, her ſinful Father; and being ſent for to cure the Malady of his ſtep-mothers will, he refuſeth to adminiſter ghoſtly comfort unto her.

The

The 24. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor, named Gregory, who married a vertuous and beautiful Lady to his Wife. This young Lady in due processe of time, conceived, and bare a Son, a fair and an amiable Childe. When this Childe was ten daies old, his Mother the Empress dyed: Not long after, the Emperor married another Wife: The second Wife could not affect or love by any means the Emperors Son, but did him all the shame and reproach that she might; When the Emperor perceived this, willing to please his Wife, he exiled his Son out of his Empire. And when the Son was exiled, he went and studied Physick, so that within a short time he was a skilful & cunning Physitian. It befel not long after, that the Emperor his Father sickned, and was almost at deaths dore, wherefore when he heard that his Son was so good a Physitian, he sent for him by Letters, praying him that he would come to him without delay. Now the Son willing to obey his Fathers commandment, in all haste came to him, and when he had felt his pulses, he discerned the sickness, and ministred physick to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Empresse his stepmother began to fall sick, and many Physiti-

ans said she would dye. And when the Emperor heard this, he sent to his Son to help her of her sickness. Then said his Son, certainly Father, I will lay no hand on her. Then the Emperor began to wax wroth, and said: If thou wilt not obey my Commandement, thou shalt henceforth depart my Empire. His Son answered and said: If thou do so (dear Father) you do unrightly, for well you know that you exiled me of your Empire through her suggestion, and my absence was the cause of your sickness, now my presence is cause of her sickness, and therefore I will not meddle with her, nor use any Physick unto her, for oftentimes Physitians are deceived in thier Patients, therefore I dare lay no hand on her, for if it should fortune her to dye, men would judge that my Physick were the cause thereof. Then said the Emperor: she hath the very same sickness that I had. His Son answered and said: Though she have the same sickness nevertheless you are not both of one constitution: for whatsoever I did to you, you were therewith content, and when you saw me come within the Palace, you rejoyced at my coming, and was greatly pleased with the sight of me that you begat: But when this my step-mother saw me, she was angry, and took care at her heart, and therefore if I should but speak to her, her sorrow would much

more

more encreaſe, and if I ſhould offer to touch her, ſhe would be in rage. Alſo a Phyſitian profiteth little except the patient take pleaſure in him: Now none can cure her of envy. And when he had ſpoken his minde, he took his leave and departed thence.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokeneth every Chriſtian man, which is married to Chriſt in the Baptiſm of regeneration, for then the Soul is made the ſpouſe of Chriſt, on whom our Saviour begetteth a Son, that is, the knowledge of his Word and Will. But when the child grew up to ſome ten years of age, or ſome increaſe in vertue, his mother Chriſtianity died: then vertue departed from youth, and afterwards the Chriſtian man his father matcheth himſelf with another woman, the ſtep-mother of the ſaid youth, named ignorant Envy, which in no wiſe could affect the Emperors Son of knowledg, wherefore ſhee cauſed him to be baniſhed into a ſtrange Country, from his Father and her both. It hapned that the good Chriſtian man, being over ruled by his Wife, falleth ſick, and ſendeth for his Son, that is, knowledge of Gods Word and Will, to cure him as his Phyſician, who dutifully performeth the ſame. But his ſtep-mother falling ſick at the ſight of the Emperors Son, though the

Chriſtian man her Huſband labours to him to cure her. as a good Phyſitian of her Soul, yet ſhe not liking his good endeadour to win her from her ignorant envy of the Truth, is very hardly healed of her ſickneſs, but often times dieth in her ignorant envy and wilful wickedneſs without any hope of health or life unto eternal ſalvation, ſo that Phyſitian comes hither too late.

The Argument.

Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God ought to be cheriſhed and foſtered in our hearts by faith and good life: which is taken from us when wee are not thankful unto him for his graces. Wherefore the Preachers of Gods Word, as good Phyſicians, are ſent unto us, for to admoniſh and warn us to perſevere in amendment of life, and conſtant hope in Chriſts merits, and ſo to harbour him in our hearts, he may thereby beſtow on us the promotion of heavenly bliſs.

The 25. Hiſtory.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Folenus, who took to wife the Kings Daughter of Germany, a fair Lady and courteous, which within ſhort time conceived and bare a Son. When the Childe was born, the States of the Empire came to the Emperor, and every one beſought the Emperor to have the bringing up of his Son. The Emperor anſwered, and ſaid: To morrow ſhall be a Turney, and

the

there you ſhall all be, and which of you doth beſt, and obtaineth the victory, he ſhall have the keeping of my Son: and if he train him up well, I ſhall promote him to great dignity and honour, and if he do the contrary he ſhall dye the fouleſt death that can be thought. Then ſaid they: Moſt reverend Lord, all this pleaſeth us well. On the morrow, when every man was come to the Tourney, the States juſted valiantly: but at length came a valiant Knight named Joſias, who ſo couragiouſly bare himſelf there, that he obtained the victory: and immediately after the Tourney was all done, this Joſias took the Child and led him home with him. And becauſe the Emperors Son ſhould be received with ſtate in his Country, he ſent before to his Caſtle, and commanded his Officers, that they ſhould royally provide for him, and that the Childes Lodging ſhould be in the midſt of the Caſtle, and alſo that the ſeven Sciences ſhould be portrayed about the Childes bed, that when the Childe waketh out of his ſleep, he might lie in his bed and behold the ſame. The Knight had a wholſome Well by the Childes bed ſide, wherein he uſed to bathe himſelf and the Knights wife bare the key of the Well, and there was a Window whereat the Sun might comfortably ſhine upon him. It fortuned upon a day, that the Lady left

open the Window through negligence, which being done, thither came a Bear, and ſeeing the Window open, went to the Well, and bathed him therein, of whoſe bathing the Well ſavoured after, through the great heat which was at that time in the hunted Bear, whereby whoſoever drank of ỹ water, waxed leprous within ſhort time after. So it fortuned that the Lord and the Lady with all the houſhold, by drinking of the water of that Well became Lepers, notwithſtanding it appeared not preſently. Not long after it fortuned there came a great Eagle in at the Window where the Emperors Son lay, and bare the Childe away out of the Cradle. Now when the Lord of the Caſtle heard this, he wept bitterly, and ſaid: Alas, alas, woe is mé wretched creature, that ever I was born, what ſhall I do? now I am the Son of Death, for I am become a loathſome Leper, and ſo is my Wife with all my Houſhold, alſo the Emperors Son is loſt and gone.

Now while he thus mourned, there came to him a Phyſitian, and ſaid: Sir if you will do after my counſel, you ſhall not repent you; Firſt, it behoveth you, your Wife, and all your Houſhold to be let blood, and after that to be bathed and clean waſhed, and then I will apply to you my medicine: and when you are whole, then ſhall you and your Houſhold walk

up

up to the mountains, and seek the Emperors Son, for the Eagle hath let it fall there in some place. Then the Lord followed the advice and counsel thus given them by the Physitian, and forthwith he and all his household were let blood, and received the medicine, and within a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus healed, he took his Horse, accompanied with three men, and rode forth to see the childe, & at last he found him whole and sound lying in a valley, whereat he greatly rejoyced. And incontinently with great joy and gladnesse he led the childe home to the Emperor his Father. Now when the Emperor saw his Son in good health, he was right glad, and promoted him to great honour. And so after that he had long time lived there in noble state, he after ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, his Son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, to nourish whom many men desire, at such time as they received the Sacrament of his death & passion. He nourisheth him best that fighteth with the Devil & overcometh him by godly life. This Knight that took his Childe with him betokeneth a good Christian man, that evermore abstaineth truly from doing evil, and laboureth continually

ally to do good to all men. Therefore do we as the Knight did, ſend meſſengers before to prepare and make clean the Caſtle of our hearts, from all ſpots of ſin, by lively Faith, and ſo ſhall this Child Jeſus reſt in the midſt of our hearts.

The Well betokeneth Mercy, which ought to be next our Lord, for whoever is without mercy and truth may not nourish the bleſſed Childe Jeſus; but it happened oft, that the Knights wife, that is the fleſh of man, beareth the key of Mercy, and oft leaveth that Well open, and then comes the Bear, that is the Devil, and leaveth his loathſome filth in the Well of mercy, and whoſo taſteth thereof, ſhall be infected with the Leproſie of ſin. The window wherein the Sun ſhined is the grace of the Holy Ghoſt, by whom men are comforted Ghoſtly. By this window the Eagle cometh in, that is the flying affections of the wicked World, carrying away the knowledge of God from us, unto the vale of ignorance and ſecurity, and thou man hath great cauſe to weep, but what ſhal we do when the Child is gone, but ſend for a skilful Phyſitian, that is a diſcreet Miniſter of the Word of God, which ſhall give him counſel to let him bleed, and all his Houſhold, that is to put out ſin through acknowledging thereof, and reconciling himſelf with earneſt repentance unto his Heavenly Father. Then

Then must he bathe himself with tears of contrition and compunction of heart, & after that, take the Medicine of amendment of life, and so live pure and clean from all manner of sin, and when he had done thus, he must leap on the Palfrey of good perseverance from evil, and ride forth with the three men, that is, falling from evil, praying to God, and well deserving towards men, and then without doubt he shal find the Child Jesus in the valley of Humility, not on a Hill, that is Pride. And if he do this, doubtlesse he shall have might and power to nourish that blessed Child Jesus, for whose nourishing the Father of Heaven shall promote him unto everlasting joy. Unto the which joy he bring us, that shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Christ the giver of everlasting Glory hath proclaimed a like joy and blisse in Heaven, as well to the poor as to the rich. But the rich oftentimes coveting all, loseth the prerogative which the poor in heart enjoy by the providence of God; Yet as he is a righteous God, he ordaineth both for the rich and poor in such sort, that if they will they may together joyfully be satisfied with the great plenty of his abundant graces.

The 26. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Fulgentius, which governed his people nobly, and loved them so much,

much, that he made a proclamation through out all Nations: that whosoever would come to him, rich or poor, at a certain day, should have their Petition, whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard this, they were glad, and came at the day assigned, and every man put forth his Petition to the Emperor, immediately their petitions were granted & fulfilled, inso much that a great part of the Revenues of the Empire was distributed among them. Then every man was joyful, and went home again, and took possession of such Lands and Castles as the Emperor had given them.

Straightway after, the poor men in the Emperors Dominions, gathered them together, and said, a common cry was made that whosoever came to the Emperors Palace should have whatsoevr he asked. The rich men have been there lately, and obtained their petitions: therefore go we now, and try if we may obtain any good of the Emperor. Now this Counsel liked them all, wherefore they went to the Emperors Palace, and there they put forth their petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperor had heard them, hee said to them: Dear friends, I have heard all your petitions, and it is true that my Proclamation was, that every man indifferently, should

should come and have their petitions, but the rich have been here before you, to whom I have given all that I had, save onely the royalty of my Lordship, and so have nothing left to give you. Whereto the poor men sadly replied, Most gracious Soveraign, have compassion on us, & let us not go away empty, for we know wel it is our own default, that we came not rather with those other rich and mighty men: but sith it is so, we crave your grace, that we may obtain somewhat by the which we may live. Then said the Emperor: Good friends, though I have given most of my Lands, Rents, Tenements and Castles, to the rich men that came before you, nevertheless, I have kept still in my own hands the Soveraignty and Dominion over them, and that I do give to you, and so they shall bee your servants, and be obedient to you all. And when the poor men heard this, they greatly rejoyced thereat, and knéeled down to the Emperor and thanked him, saying: Lo though we be come late, yet we be Lords over all those other. And with this they took their leave, and went home again. But when the rich and mighty men heard that, they were greatly moved; and ordained a common Parliament among themselves. And thus it was spoken among them: Alas, alas, how may we serve them? sometime were but peasants, and our

subjects

subject in all manner of things: and now they be made Lords over us. Therefore go we all with one assent to the Emperor, & pray him for redresse. When this was said, they forthwith went to the Emperor, and said to him: Reverend Lord, what may this mean? Those that were our servants even while, be now our Lords: We beseech your Highnesse that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperor: My good friends, I do you no wrong, for my Proclamation was common, & whatsoever you asked of me you should have your petition, & you asked only of me Lands and Honours, and all those I have granted you to your own desires, insomuch that I kept nothing for my self, and you were well content at your going hence. Now after that came the simple and poor men, and asked of me some boon according to my Proclamation, and I had nothing to give them but only the soveraignty and dominion over you, which I kept in my hands: and when the poor men cryed so to me, I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame me therefore: for I gave you all the wealth which I had. Then said they: O dear and gracious Lord, we pray you let us have your help & advise in that so dangerous a case

The Emperor answered, and said: Sirs, if you will follow my advise, I shall give ye good and profitable Counsel. Then

Then they said: we be ready to fulfill whatsoever you advise us for our profit.

Then said the Emperor: My loving Friends, you have received of me both Lands and Tenements, and also great plenty of honours & preferments; the which by my counsel you shall impart to the poor men, that they may grant unto you the Soveraignty, and that dominion which they have. When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poor men, and they as willingly gave them again the Authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented, and the Emperor was greatly commended of the people, because he so well contented both parties.

The Moral.

Dear friends, by this Emperor is understood our Lord Jesus Christ, which made a Proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarks, Apostles, and Preachers, that every man both poor and rich, should come and ask everlasting joy, and without doubt they shal obtain their petitions but the rich and mighty men ask for no other thing but worldly honour, & transitory riches, yet this world shall passe, and all the covetousnesse thereof: wherefore he gave them so much of worldly wealth, that he had nothing for himself, according to the Scriptures: The

Birds

Birds of heaven have nests, & the Foxes of the earth have caves, but the Son of man hath nothing in the earth where he may put his head, Mat. 8. 20. **The poor men be the meek in heart of whom the Lord speaketh, saying:** Blessed be the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 5. 20. **So it shall seem that they have soveraignty in Heaven above the mighty men of the world, therefore these rich men ought to impart of their temporal riches to the poor men according to the Scripture:** Make you friends with riches of iniquity, that when ye shall want, they may receive you into everlasting habitation, Luk. 16. 9. **And according to** Tob. 4. 9. Give Alms of thy substance: if thou hast but a little, be not afraid to give a little Alms. **And thus ye may attain unto the Kingdome of Heaven. Unto the which I beseech Almighty God bring us all.**

The Argument.

The Emperor of Glory, Christ Jesus, hath two daughters, the one fair, the other foul, the fair daughter is the world, and the pleasures thereof, and foul is poverty and trouble: The fair daughter is desired of many, the foul of few, for he that loveth the world regardeth only the vanities thereof, but he that loveth God will suffer all persecution and trouble for the obtaining of him.

The 27. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a noble Emperor, named Domitian: which had two daughters,

ters, the one of them was passing fair, but the other foul and ill favoured: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, That whoso would take his fair Daughter to wife, should have no other thing with her, but her beautiful and comely personage; but whoso would marry his foul Daughter, should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this Proclamation was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his fair daughter: to whom the Emperor answered thus. Sirs, ye wot not what ye desire; for, if ye marry her, ye shall have nothing with her, but her beautiful and comely Personage: and furthermore, if I give her to one of you, rather than to another, you will grudge; therefore, if ye will needs have her, and forsake my foul Daughter, you shall just for her, and he that winneth her, shall marry her.

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly rejoyced; and for the love of that beautiful Damsel, they would not only Just, but fight also. So they set a day of battel and many worthy men were slain on both sides; nevertheless, one obtained the victory, and espoused that fair Lady.

The second Daughter which was foul, and ill-favoured seeing her sister so bestowed with great solemnity, wept daily: therefore the Emperor her father came to her & said, Dear

Daughter, Why mournest thou thus? Alas dear Father quoth she, it is no wonder though I mourn, seeing my Sister is married with great honour and gladness, and every man is joyful of her, and no man careth for my company, therefore dear Father, what I shall do I know not. Then said the Emperor: O my dear Daughter, all that is mine, is thine, and it is not unknown to thee, that he which marryed thy sister, had nothing with her, but her beautiful corps: and therefore I shall proclaim in mine own person, through mine Empire, that what man will marry thee, I shall assure him the Empire after my decease, by Letters patent. Then this young Lady, though she was foul and ill favoured, nevertheless she rejoyced greatly in the promise of her Father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper & young Kt. which espoused the Lady, and after the death of the Emperor, he seized upon all the Empire, and he was crowned Emperor, and she Empresse; and after that, they lived together a long time in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which had two daughters, the one fair, and the other foul: The fair Daughter betokeneth the world, which is full fair, and delectable to many men. The

foul

foul betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheless, a Proclamation was made by the Holy Scripture, that whoso would have his fair Daughter, that is, the World, should have nothing with her but her fairnesse, that is, the worldly vanities, which fade and fall away, like as the beauty of man: but whoso will Marry the foul Daughter, that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt he shall obtain the Empire of Heaven, according to the Scripture, saying: Ye that have forsaken all things for my love, to follow me, shall have everlasting Life.

Many noble and worthy men have Justed for the fair Daughter, that is, have sought and travelled by Sea and by Land, in this World, for covetousnesse of worldly riches, and at length there be many slain: for there is nothing here, but Pride of Life, Covetousnes of the eyes & of the flesh, where through these grievous sins all ꝑ world is put to great damage and mischief: So he that married the fair Daughter, that is the World, is he that setteth all his affections and whole desire, upon the wretchednes & vanities of this wicked World, and will not by any means forsake this vain world, like a wretch. But he ꝑ Marrieth the foul Daughter, that is, the good Christian man, which for the love of the King-

dom of Heaven, & the everlaſting joyes thereof, forſaketh all this world; and not only doth thus, but alſo deſpiſeth himſelf, obeying the true and everlaſting God in all things; Such a man certainly ſhall obtain the joyful and happy Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

Devotion, Prayer and thankſgiving unto God for his gifts, is a ſweet ſounding Muſick, delectable in the ears of God: We are hereby warned; after our firſt offending, not to return to our vomit with the Dog; nor after waſhing, with the Sow, to wallow in the mire: No, rather let us bathe our ſelves in ſorrowful and hearty repentance, in perſeverance in good life, that we may live with Chriſt in everlaſting joy and bliſs.

The 28. Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Adromicha, the which above all things loved Muſick. This Emperor had within his Palace a Well of ſuch vertue, that whoſoever were drunk, by drinking the water thereof, ſhould incontinently become freſh again and be delivered from all kinde of dizzineſſe. There was alſo dwelling in the Emperors Court a Knight, named Ydrony, whom the Emperor loved much, but oft times he would be drunk, which Vice the Emperor hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himſelf drunk, then

then would he go to the Well, and drink of that water, and refresh himself, so that whatsoever the Emperor said to him he would answer him so reasonably, that no drunkennes might be seen in him, and for his witty answers he was greatly beloved of the Emperor. Nevertheless his fellows sought to draw the Emperors love from him.

It fortuned on a day, that this Emperor went to the Forrest, where he heard a Nightingale sing right pleasantly: oftentimes after, he would rise early in the morning, and sometime from his meat, and walk into the Wood to hear her sweet song, wherefore many of his men said among themselves: our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingals song, that he reckoneth nothing our profit, insomuch that through two things his love is withdrawn from us, that is, Ydrony the Knight, and by the sweet Song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them: Sirs, quoth he, if ye will follow my counsel, I shall deliver you of the Knight Ydrony, and also the Nightingale, without hurt or death. Then they answered, and said: whatsoever you advise us to do, we shall straightway fulfil it with all our hearts. When this Knight heard this, within a while after he chanced to espy this Knight Ydrony drunk, wherefore he locked fast the Well, so

when this Knight Ydrony came to refresh himself he found the Well fast locked.

Now the Emperor had a great business to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight because of his great wisdome, to have his counsel. And when hee came before the Emperor, he was so drunk that he could not move his tongue, neither had wit, nor reason, nor understanding to answer the Emperor to his matter.

But when the Emperor saw this, he was greatly vexed, for as much as he hated that vice: wherefore he commanded anon, that from that day forward hee should bee seen no more within his Land upon poin of death.

This hearing, his foes they rejoyced, and said unto the old Knight: now we be delivered of this Knight Ydrony, there is no more to do, but that we may find a way to be delivered also of the Nightingale, in which the Emperor delighteth so much.

Then said the old Knight, Your ears shall hear, and your eyes shall see this Nightingale shall be destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this old Knight espied that the Nightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the aforesaid Well, whereas her mate came and coupled with her. nevertheless in the absence of her Mate, she took oftentimes another

another mate and coupled with him: When she had thus done, then would shee descend to the Well to bathe her self, that when her Mate came, he should feel no ill savor or scent of that she had done. When the Knight had seen this, on a time he locked the Well, and when the Nightingale would have descended to bathe her self, after coupling with the other Mate, she found the Well closed: wherefore she flew up into the Tree again, and mourn'd sore in her manner, & left her Song. Then came her Mate and saw that she had done against her nature, he returned again, and in short time brought a great multitude of Nightingals, which slew his Mate, and tare her all in peices.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokenth our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth greatly the Song of Devotion, for when wee pray we speak unto God, and when wee read God speaketh unto us. The Well ȳ was in the Palace betokeneth acknowledging of our sins to God. Therefore if any be drunk with sin, let him drink of the Well of acknowledging of his sins and without doubt he shall be safe.

This Ydrony betokeneth every man that wilfully returneth again to sin after his acknowledging sin, like as the Dog, that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meat that he

hath eaten before, and afterward, when he is hungry, cometh and eateth it again. Nevertheless, if a man that hath thus sinned, will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sin, he shall receive his Ghostly strength.

The Nightingale that sate on the tree, betokens the soul that sitteth on the tree of Holy Doctrine. And her Song betokeneth the Soul that sitteth on the tree of devout Prayers to God. But this Soul doth commit evil as oft as she consenteth to sin. Nevertheless, if she run to the Well of acknowledging of sin, and bathe her with the water of contrition, God shall love her.

But her Foes, that is, the Fiends of Hell, seeing this, that God is merciful, they stop the Well of acknowledgment of sin, that is, they would withdraw us from dutiful acknowledgment, and from due reconciliation of our selves betwen us and God, & betwen us & man, without shame and dread of repentance, not to declare our sins. And thus, through the temptation of the Devil our Adversary, many have been exiled, and put to death everlastingly. And therefore study we to bathe our souls in this life in the Well of acknowledgment of sin, with the Water of Contrition, and then we shall be sure in the World to come to have joy everlastingly. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The Soul of every good Christian man ought to prepare Armed Vertues for to withstand the assaults of the Devil. We are here put in minde of our deliverance from death, by the precious blood-shed of Jesus Christ: which is a terror to all the Devils in Hell, if we continue in Faith, and believe in him, the bulwark of our Salvation.

The 29. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Hermes, which had a mighty strong City, exceeding strongly walled about, and a Bell hanging in the midst of the said City; and whensoever the Emperor went to any battel without the City, this Bell was ever rung; but there did no man ring the Bell, but a Virgin. Within short time after it befell, that Dragons, Serpents, and also many other venomous Beasts, impoisoned much people, so that the City was almost destroyed: Wherefore, the States of the City went with one accord to the Emperor, and said: Lord what shall we do? Lo, our people, our goods, and our City is almost destroyed, and you and we be in peril to perish, through these cruel Beasts that consume us, therefore take we good counsel, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperor: What think you is best to be done in this matter? and how may we be best defended? Then answered one of the wisest, and said: My

Lord,

Lord, hear my counsel. and do thereafter, and you shall not repent it: You have in your Palace a Lyon, set up a peice of timber for the purpose, & thereunto let the Lion be nailed and made fast, and when other venomous Beasts see him thus used, they will be afraid, and forsake our City, and we shal be in safety. Then said the Emperor, it pleaseth me well that he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they took the Lyon and used him in like manner as aforesaid, which when the other Beasts saw, fled away for fear, and never more afterwards durst they come thither.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, the City wel walled, with a Bell in the midst, betokeneth the Soul walled about with vertues. The Bell betokeneth a clean Conscience that warneth a man to Battel, when he should fight against the Devil, that he might arm himself before with vertues. The Virgin that should alwaies ring this Bell in Reason, which is a Virgin inclineth to all rightfull cleanneſſe. The venomous Dragon that beareth the fire betokeneth the flesh of man, which beareth the fire of Covetousnes, which burnt Adam our forefather, when he eat of ỳ forbidden Apple. The venomous Beasts that poisoned the men betokeneth the fiends of Hell, which for the most

most part have destroyed all mankinde. The States of the City betokeneth the Patriarks and Prophets, which besought God of counsel and remedy, that mankinde might be saved, & anon it was counselled for the best remedy, ℔ a Lyon (that is Christ) should be nailed upon the Crois, according to the Scripture saying thus, It was requisite that one man should die for the people, lest all flesh should perish. Then took they Christ and hung him on the Crois, for the which the Devil dreadeth Christian people, and dares not come nigh them. And thus by the grace of God, Christian men shal come to everlasting bliss, Unto the which bring us the Lamb of God, which shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Here is signified the thraldome of man unto Satan by sin, till Christ the Son of God descended, with the power of the Holy Ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the Palace of everlasting felicity.

The 30. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a merciful, named Menelay, who ordained such a Law, that what innocent person was taken and put in prison, if he might escape and come to the Emperors Palace, he would be there safe from all manner of accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befel, that

that a Knight was accuſed, wherefore, he was taken and put in a ſtrong and dark Priſon, where he lay a long time, and had no light but a little Window, whereat ſcant light ſhone in, that lighted him to eat ſuch ſimple meat as was brought him by his képer: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made ſorrow that he was thus faſt ſhut up from the ſight of men. Nevertheleſs, when the Képer was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the window, & ſung full ſwétly, by whoſe Song this woful Knight was oftentimes fed with joy, and when the bird left off ſinging, then would ſhe fly into the Knights boſome, and there this Knight fed her many a day, of the victual that God ſent him. It befel after upon a day, that the Knight was greatly deſolate of comfort. Nevertheleſſe, the Bird that ſate in his boſome fed upon kernels of Nuts, and thus he ſaid to the Bird: Swét Bird, I have ſuſtained thée many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my deſolation to comfort me? Remember thy ſelf well, how that thou art the creature of God, and ſo am I alſo, and therefore help me now in this my great néed.

When the Bird heard this, ſhe flew forth from his boſome, and tarried from him thrée daies but the third day ſhe came again, and brought in her mouth a precious Stone, and laid

laid it in the Knights bosome. And when she had so done, she took her flight, and flew from him again. The Knight marvelled at the Stone, and at the Bird, and forthwith he took the Stone in his hand, and touched his Gives and Fetters therewith, and presently they fell off. And then he arose and touched the doors of the Prison, and they opened, and he escaped, and ran fast to the Emperors Palace. When the Keeper of the Prison perceived this, he blew his Horn thrice, and raised up all the Folk of the City, and led them forth, crying with an high voice, Lo, the Thief is gone, follow we him all. And with that he ran before all his Fellows towards the Knight: And when he came nigh him, the Knight bent his Bow, and shot an Arrow, wherewith he smote the Keeper in the Lungs, and slew him and then ran to the Palace, where he found succour against the Law.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordained a Law, that what Innocent, that is, what person imprisoned wrongfully, might escape, and come to his Palace in his Heavenly Habitation through Repentance and true amendment of life, should finde perpetual succour and help.

This

This Knight betokeneth every one that is innocent, and accused by envy or malice unjustly, taking grief for his present estate.

The Keeper of this prison, betokeneth the Devil, that keepeth such a man hard bound by sin, and serveth him with riches and delights of this transitory world, that he should not escape from danger.

The bird that singeth so sweetly, betokeneth the voice of Heaven, that saith to the oppressed: Turn again, now turn again, thou Prisoner, that is, turn again thou oppressed, and I will receive thee to Grace, for when Mankind was in thraldom to Satan in the Prison of Hell, then came there a Bird, that is, the Godhead, bearing with him a Stone, that betokens our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Holy Scripture, saying: I am a Stone.

The Soul of Christ descended with the Godhead, and brought with him all Mankind out of the Prison of Hell, therefore if any of us be in the Prison of worldly oppression, touch we our sins with the Stone, that is, with the Vertue of the Lord Jesus Christ, by acknowledging our sin in faithful prayer, and by true contrition, and then without doubt, the chains of our oppression, with the Stone, shall be broken and fall from us, and the door of Heavenly Grace shal be opened, and we

shall

ſhall obtain help and ſuccour in the Palace of the Heavenly Habitation.

And if the Kæper of the pꝛiſon, that is ꝧ Devil (which is the blower of the Hoꝛn of Pꝛide, Letchery oꝛ Covetouſue(s) ſtir in us any ſins, then turn we towards him manfully, and ſhoot at him the Arrow of conſtant Faith in Jeſus Chꝛiſt, by true and unfeigned Repentance, and without doubt he ſhall fly from us: and then by the Gꝛace of God, we may obtain the Palace of Heavenly bliſſe, where we ſhall behold the King of all Glozy. Unto the which bꝛing us our Loꝛd Jeſus Chꝛiſt. Amen.

The Argument.

A poor man exalted to dignity, is here admoniſhed not to be unthankful, and to render evil for good, but even to the moſt ſimple ones to be grateful for any benefit, elſe ſurely God that gives thee this promotion, will make the bꝛutiſh creatures of the earth thy enemies, and depoſe thee from thy dignity; and he that hath helped thee, be he never ſo bale, may in the end have better favour with God and man than thy ſelf, wherefore be warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy ſelf, thy God, and Friend.

The 31. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperoꝛ, Named Ebolides. It foꝛtuned on a day, that this Emperoꝛ walked into a great Foꝛreſt to take his pleaſure, where he met ſuddenly with a poꝛ man, and ſo ſoon as the Emperoꝛ ſaw him, he was greatly moved with

with mercy, and said: God friend, whence art thou: My Soveraign Lord, quoth he, I am your Subject born in your Land, and am now in great poverty. Then said the Emperor: If I knew that thou wert true in every thing, I would promote thee to great riches, therefore tell me, what is thy Name?

My Lord, quoth he, I am called Leontius, and I promise you to do you true service, and if I do otherwise, I submit my self unto all manner of punishment that ỹ can put me to; When the Emperor heard that, he promoted him incontinently to great riches, and shortly after he made him a Knight, and the Steward of his Land. And when he was thus exalted to honour, he waxed very proud, insomuch that he despised both his superiours, and inferiours: Not long after this Steward rode by a great Forrest, where he met with ỹ Forrester, and charged him that he should make an hundred pits in the ground, and cover them over with green geasse and small boughs, that if wilde beasts fortuned to go to the Forrest that way, they might fall in, and so being taken, be brought to the Emperor. The Forrester answered, and said: Sir, as you have said, it shall be done. Not long after it fortuned, that this Steward rode to the Forrest again to see if those pits were made, and as he rode, he bethought himself how wealthy a man, and

how

how mighty in power he was made, and how most men in the Empire obeyed him, and were at his command. As he rode thus thinking, he said to himself: There is no man greater than I, and with that he smote his Horse with his spurs, and suddenly he fell into one of the deep pits, that he himself had ordained before, for the wilde beasts, and for the great deepnesse thereof he could not rise again by any manner of means, wherefore he languished in great perplexity: and straight way after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell into the same pit, and after the Lyon an Ape, and after the Ape a Serpent. When the Steward was thus beset with these Beasts, he was exceedingly afraid.

Then at that time was dwelling in the City, a poor man named Guy, that had no riches save onely an Ass, whereon daily he carried sticks and wood that fell from trees, and such as he could get in the Forrest, and those he brought to the Market and sold them: and in this wise sustained himself and his wife as long as he might.

It fortuned that this poor Guy went to the Forrest as he was wont, and as he came by the deep pit, he heard a man cry and say: O dear friend what art thou? for Gods sake help me, and I shall recompence thee so well that thou shalt ever after be the better: when

this poor Guy heard that it was the voice of a man, he marvelled greatly, and stood still on the Pits brink, and said: Lo, good friend, I am come, why hast thou called me? Then said the Knight: Dear friend, I am Steward of all the Emperors Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the pit, and here be with me three Beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and an horrible Serpent, which I fear most of all, and I wot not of which of them I shall be devoured: therefore I pray thee get a long Rope, wherewith thou maist draw me out of this deep pit, and I will make thee rich for ever hereafter: for if I have not help the rather, I shall bee devoured of these cruel Beasts.

Then said this poor Guy, I may full ill at this time intend to help thee, for I have nothing to live on, but that I gather wood, and carry it to the Market to sell, wherewith I am sustained. Nevertheless, I will leave my purposed labour, and fulfill thy will: and if thou reward me not, it wil be great hinderance to me, and to my poor Wife. Then the Steward made a great oath, and said: I will promote thee and thine to great wealth. Then said Guy, if you will performe your promise, I shall do what you command me. And with that he went again to the City, and bought there a long Rope; and came to the

Pit

Pit again, and said: Sir Steward, loe here I let down a Rope to thee, binde thy self about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: God friend let down the Rope: and with that he cast the end of the Rope down into the pit; And when the Lyon saw it, he caught the Rope and held fast, and Guy drew up the Lyon, weening in himself he had drawn up the Steward, and when he had so done, the Lyon thanked in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The second time that Guy let down the Rope the Ape leapt to it, and caught it fast, & when he was drawn up, he thanked Guy in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The third time he let down the Rope, he drew up the Serpent, which thanked him, and went to the wood. Then the Steward cryed with a loud voice: O dear friend, now I am delivered of these three ravenous Beasts, let down the Rope to me, that I may come up. Then this poor Guy let down the Rope and the Steward bound himself fast about the middle, and Guy drew him up. And when he was thus holp out of the pit, he said to Guy, as followeth:

Come to me to morrow to the Palace, and then I will reward thee. Then poor Guy rejoyced thereat, and went home without Reward. Then his Wife demanded of him why he gathered no wood whereby they might

liue that day. Then told he her of the event as it befel, how the Steward fell into the Pit (and alſo the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that he had made in the Foreſt, & how he had holpen him out with a Rope, and ſaued him from being deuoured of the three venomous Beaſts: and that he ſhould go to the Steward, and fetch his Reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this, ſhe reioyced greatly, and ſaid: If it ſhall be ſo, pray you riſe to morrow at a due hour and go to the Palace, and receiue your Reward, that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy aroſe, and went to the Palace, and knocked at the Gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cauſe of his knocking? I pray thee quoth this Guy, go to the Steward, & ſay to him: That here abideth a poor man at the Gate, that ſpake with him yeſterday in the Foreſt. The Porter went & told the Steward as the poor man had ſaid; Then ſaid the Steward: Go you again, and tell him, that he lyeth, for yeſterday ſpake I with no man in the Foreſt, and charge him that he go away and trouble me no more. The Porter went forth, & told poor Guy what the Steward had ſaid, and charged him to go away. Then was this poor Guy ſorrowful, and went home, and he told his wife how the Steward anſwered him. His Wife comfor-

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ted him in all ſhe might, and ſaid: Go you again and proue him thrice.

Then on the morrow this Guy aroſe, and went to the Palace again, praying the Porter to do his errand once again to the Steward. The Porter anſwered and ſaid: Gladly would I do thy errand, but I fear me ſore, it will be to thy hurt. Then went he in and told the Steward, That this poor man was again returned, when the Steward heard that, hee went out, and all to beat poor Guy, and left him in peril of death.

When his Wife heard this, ſhe came with her Aſs, and led him home as ſhe might, and all that ſhe had ſhe ſpent upon Surgeons, and Phyſitians to help him: and when he was perfectly whole, he went to the Forreſt as he was wont, for to gather ſticks and ſmall wood for his living. And as he went in the Forreſt, he ſaw a Lyon driving before him ten Aſſes that were laden with rich Jewels and Merchandiſe. This Lyon drove forth the Aſſes before Guy, which feared him ſore, leſt hee ſhould have devoured him, nevertheleſſe when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the ſame Lyon that he drew out of the pit. This Lyon left not Guy till all the Aſſes with the Merchandiſe were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeyſance, and ran to the Wood.

live that day. Then told he her of the event as it befel, how the Steward fell into the Pit (and also the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that he had made in the Forrest, & how he had holpen him out with a Rope, and saved him from being devoured of the three venomous Beasts: and that he should go to the Steward, and fetch his Reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this, she rejoyced greatly, and said: If it shall be so, pray you rise to morrow at a due hour and go to the Palace, and receive your Reward, that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Palace, and knocked at the Gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking? I pray thee quoth this Guy, go to the Steward, & say to him: That here abideth a poor man at the Gate, that spake with him yesterday in the Forrest. The Porter went & told the Steward as the poor man had said; Then said the Steward: Go you again, and tell him, that he lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no man in the Forrest, and charge him that he go away and trouble me no more. The Porter went forth, & told poor Guy what the Steward had said, and charged him to go away. Then was this poor Guy sorrowful, and went home, and he told his wife how the Steward answered him. His Wife comfor-

ted

ted him in all she might, and said: Go yon again and prove him thrice.

Then on the morrow this Guy arose, and went to the Palace again, praying the Porter to do his errand once again to the Steward. The Porter answered and said: Gladly would I do thy errand, but I fear me sore, it will be to thy hurt. Then went he in and told the Steward, That this poor man was again returned, when the Steward heard that, hee went out, and all to beat poor Guy, and left him in peril of death.

When his Wife heard this, she came with her Ass, and led him home as she might, and all that she had she spent upon Surgeons, and Physitians to help him: and when he was perfectly whole, he went to the Forrest as he was wont, for to gather sticks and small wood for his living. And as he went in the Forrest, he saw a Lyon driving before him ten Asses that were laden with rich Jewels and Merchandise. This Lyon drove forth the Asses before Guy, which feared him sore, lest hee should have devoured him, nevertheless when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the same Lyon [illegible] he drew out of the pit. This Lyon left not Guy till all the Asses with the Merchandise were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeysance, and ran to the Wood.

Then Guy searched the fardels, and found great riches therein, wherefore he made proclamation in diverse Churches, if any man had lost such goods, he should have them again, but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this, he sold the goods, and bought therewith House and Land, and so was made rich. Nevertheless he went to the Forrest, as he did before. And as he was in the Forrest gathering wood, he spyed the Ape on the top of a Tree, breaking boughs busily with her teeth and claws, and throwing them down, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Asse: And when he had so done, she went her way, and Guy went home.

Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest again, and as he sate binding his faggots, he saw the Serpent that he drew out of the pit come towards him, bearing in her mouth a precious stone of three colours, which she let fall at Guy's feet, and when she had thus done, she kissed his feet and went her way. Then Guy took up the stone and marvelled greatly of what vertue it might be, wherefore he rose up and went to a Jeweller named Gloot, and said: Dear Brother, I pray thee tell me the vertue of this precious stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labour. When this Jeweller had well beheld, and knew the nature of the stone, he said: Good friend, if thou list to

sell

sell the Stone, I shall give thée an hundred Marks for it. Then said Guy, I will not sell the Stone, till thou tell me truly the vertues thereof. Then said the Jeweller, without doubt this Stone hath three vertues: the first vertue is, that whosoever beareth this stone about him, shall have joy without sorrow: the second vertue is, that he shall have plenty without want: the third vertue is, that he shall have light without darknesse, and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it, but for as much as it is worth, and if he do the contrary, the Stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, he was right joyful, and said to himself, in a good hour I drew these Beasts out of the pit.

Not long after it befel, that this Guy was made passing rich, and bought great possessions and livings, wherefore within a while he was made a Knight.

It was not long after, but the Emperor had knowledge how Sir Guy had a Stone of such vertue, whe[illegible] he sent for Sir Guy, commanding h[illegible]me in all hast, and so he did [illegible] was come to the Emp[illegible] the Emperor th[illegible] my friend, I have heard say, th[illegible] times thou wert in great povert[illegible] cha[illegible] thou art made rich by the vertue of a [illegible]one, therefore I pray thée that thou [illegible]me that Stone. Sir Guy

answered and said, that may I not do, for so long as I have that Stone, I am sure of three things, that is of joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkness.

When the Emperor heard this, he had a greater desire to buy the Stone than he had before, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chuse one, that is whether thou wilt forsake this Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the stone. Then said Sir Guy: My Lord, if it must néds be thus be it at your will. Nevertheless I shall tell you the property of this Stone, if you pay not for it as it is worth, without doubt it will come to me again. Then the Emperor said, surely I will give sufficient, for thou shalt receive of me therefore a thousand pound, and so it was done. Sir Guy received the money, and went home.

On the morrow early he opened his Coffer, and found the Stone, and then he told to the Lady his Wife, how he had found in his Coffer the stone which he had sold to the Emperor. Then said his Wife: Nay Sir, take you unto the Emperor again, and give him the Stone, lest he be displeased, and through malice repute some deceit in us.

Then went Sir Guy again to the Emperor, and said to him: My Lord, yesterday I sold you a Stone, which if it please you, I would fain

fain se. The Emperor went for his Stone to the Treasury, but found it not, wherefore he was right sorrowful, and came again, and told Sir Guy how it was lost; then said Sir Guy: My Lord, grieve you not, for I told you yesterday, that I might not sell it, except I had the value thereof, and yesterday I received a thousand pound of you therefore, and this day I found it in my Coffer again, and therefore if I had not brought the stone again, peradventure you would have shewed me your heavy countenance, and with that he shewed forth the Stone, whereat the Emperor marvelled greatly, and said, Sir Guy, by the faith that thou owest to me, tell me how thou camest by this Stone.

Then said Sir Guy, by the faith that I owe to you, I shall tell you the very truth, as touching the Stone.

Your Steward that is so promoted up of nought, caused many deep Pits to be made in your Forrest, and it fortuned that he not long after fell into one of them himself, & through the deepnesse thereof could not rise again. It chanced also the same day, that a Lyon, an Ape, & a Serpent fell into the pit with him, at which time I was a very poor man, & took great pains for my living, and as I walked into the Forrest with mine Ass to gather wood he cryed to me to help him out of the Pit, and

save

save him from death, for there were in the Pit with him three venomous beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and a foul Serpent, and then he promised me by his word, to promote me and all my kindred to great riches: which when I heard, I was right glad, and let down a Rope unto him, supposing to have drawn him up, and haled up a Lyon, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward.

The Lyon gave me ten Asses laden with Merchandise, the Ape gave me as much wood as mine Asse would bear, and the Serpent gave me this Stone that I have sold you; but your Steward beat me, and wounded me so sore for my good will, that I was born home upon mine Asse.

When the Emperor heard this, his heart was moved greatly against the Steward, wherefore he examined him of that false deed: but he was dumb, and would not speak, for so much that he could not deny his ingratitude.

Then said the Emperor: O thou wretched creature; unreasonable Beasts, as the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good deed, and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten him to death & saved thee, & took thee out of the pit, therefore for thy falshood & wickedness, I judge thee to be hanged

ed this day on the Gallows, and all thy goods and lands I grant to Sir Guy, and also I ordain that Sir Guy shall occupy thy place, and be my Steward: and so it was done.

When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the Emperor and made Steward, he was well beloved of every man as long as he lived, and at the last ended his life with honour in peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, the poor man betokeneth every man that cometh into this world, and at last is promoted to great riches and worldly honour, as the Psalmist saith: God lifteth up the poor man out of the mire, But many such men neither know God nor themselves, but cause deep pits to be made, that is unkindnesse and malice, they ordain against simple men, into the which pit the Devil oft causeth them to fall, according to the Text in Ecclesiasticus, who maketh a pit for another man, himself falleth therein: which Text was proved by Haman, who caused a Gallows to be set up for Mordocheus, but was hanged theron himself.

This Guy that went daily to the Forrest with his Ass to gather wood, betokeneth every just and godly man, fearing God in the Forrest of this world: his wood that he gathereth betokeneth his faith and good works, which he

carrieth

carrieth upon his Aſſe humane endeavour, whereby his ſoul may have joy, and live in the tabernacle of Heaven, and as the Steward, the Lyon, the Ape and the Serpent fell into the pit, right ſo a ſinful man falleth into the pit of ſin: But the Lyon of the Tribe of Juda (that is Jeſus Chriſt) deſcended with him as oftentimes as the ſinner hath will to come to grace. Therefore ſaith the Pſalmiſt, I am with him in tribulation.

This Guy draweth up the Lyon, that is mans ſoul out of the pit, by the cord of vertue he drew up the Ape alſo, that is, contrary will to reaſon, that he may obey to reaſon: for of all manner of Beaſts, the Ape is moſt like to man, right as amongſt all the ſtrengths of the ſoul, diſcretion ought to be linked with reaſon, and to obey reaſon. He drew up alſo a Serpent, by which is to be underſtood repentance, for two cauſes: for as the Serpent beareth in his mouth venom, and in his tail a medicine: right ſo repentance beareth at the beginning bitterneſs to the doer, yet it is ſweet and medicinable unto the ſoul at the end, and therefore every juſt man ſhould draw to him y Serpent of repentance. Then at the laſt he drew up the Steward from the pit of ſin, according unto Chriſts ſaying, I am come not only to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance. Alſo it is written, that Seneca

the

the Philosopher taught the Emperor many Laws and Vertues of truth, and at last as the Steward did, he sought the death of Seneca. Also Christ gave power to Judas to work miracles, as he did to the other Disciples, yet betrayed him at last: Right so, now adays many children of Belial delight more to do harm than good, especially to them that would instruct them perfectly both for soul & body.

The Lyon gave to the just and godly poor man ten Asses laden with merchandise: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every righteous man ten Commandements charged with vertues, by which he groweth to the riches of Heaven.

The Aye also gathereth him wood, as oft as the just man worketh the works of faith: for wood necessarily is profitable for two uses, that is, to make a fire, to build houses; even so Charity rejoyceth God and Angels in Heaven according to Scripture, More joy is among Angels for one sinner that repenteth, &c. Charity also raiseth the House of Heaven against the coming of the Soul.

The Serpent gave him also a stone of three divers colours, which betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we seek by Repentance. Therefore saith St. Jerome, in his second Table thus: We should repent us after our shipwrack.

That

That Chriſt is the Stone, may be proved by himſelf, ſaying: I am a living Stone; Chriſt hath three colours, which betokeneth the power of the Father, the wiſdom of the Son, and the humility of the holy Ghoſt: Therefore whoſo may get this precious ſtone ſhall have the Empire of Heaven, joy without ſorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkneſſe. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

By the Nativity of Chriſt proceedeth joyful gladneſſe to the world, and ſalvation unto mankinde; yet is man unthankful unto God, contrary to his promiſe made in Baptiſm. We are warned in all worldly tempeſts continually to cleave to Chriſt by Faith and Hope, to continue well doing, and to withſtand the malice of the Devil: The Preachers of Gods Word, are ſent of God to confound the Devil by ſound Doctrine and good life. Life and Death is ſet before men: we ought then to chuſe that life, that may be for our everlaſting comfort.

The 32. Hiſtory.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Anſelm: who had married the Kings Daughter of Jeruſalem, a fair Lady and a gracious in the ſight of every man, but ſhe was long time with the Emperor, ere ſhe bare him any Child, wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very ſorrowful, becauſe their Lord had no Heir of his own body begotten.

Till

Till at last it befel, that this Anselm walked after supper, in an evening, into his Garden, and bethought himself that he had no Heir, and how the King of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as he had no Son to make defence in his absence, therefore he was sorrowful, and went to his Chamber and slept. Then he thought he saw a Vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear than it was wont to be, and that the Moon was much paler on the one side than on the other. And after he saw a Bird of two colours and by that Bird flew two Beasts, which fed that little Bird with their heat. And after that came more Beasts, and bowing their breasts towards the Bird, went their way: Then came there divers Birds that sung sweetly, & pleasantly; with that the Emperor awaked.

In the morning early this Anselm remembred his vision, & wondred much what it might signifie, wherefore he called to him his Philosophers, and also the States of the Empire, and told them his dream; charging them to tell him the signification thereof, upon pain of death, & if they told him the true interpretation therof, he promised them great reward. Then said they: dear Lord, tell us your dream, and we shall declare to you what it betokens. Then the Emperor told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is afore-

said

said. When the Philosophers heard this, with glad chear they answered and said: Sir, the Vision that you saw betokeneth good, for the Empire shall be clearer than it is.

The Moon that is more pale on the one side than on the other, betokeneth the Empress, that hath lost part of her colour, through the conception of a Son that she hath conceived. The little Bird betokeneth the Son that she shall bear. The two Beasts that fed this Bird betokeneth the wise & rich men of the Empire which shall obey the Son; These other Beasts that bowed their breasts to the Bird, betoken many other Nations that shal do him Homage. The Bird that sang so sweetly to this little Bird, betokeneth the Romans, who shall rejoyce & sing because of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your Dream.

When the Emperor heard this, he was right joyful. Soon after that the Empresse travelled in Childe-birth, and was delivered of a fair Son, at whose birth there was great and wonderful joy made.

When the King of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himself thus: Lo, I have warred against the Emperor all the daies of my life, and now he hath a Son, who when he cometh to ful age, wil revenge the wrong I have done against his Father, therefore it is better that I send to the Emperor, and beseech him of truce

truce and peace, that the Son may have nothing against me when he cometh to manhood: When he had thus said to himself, he wrote to the Emperor, beseeching him to have peace. When the Emperor saw that the B. of Ampluy wrote to him more for fear than for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good & sufficient sureties to keep y peace, and bind himself all the daies of his life to do him service & homage, & to give him yearly a certain tribute, he would receive him to peace.

When the King had read the tenor of the Emperors Letter, he called his counsel, praying them to give him Counsel how he might best do, as touching this matter. Then said they: It is good that ye obey the Emperors will and commandement in all things. For first, in that he desired of you surety for the Peace, to this we answer, thus; Ye have but one Daughter, and the Emperor one Son, wherefore, let a marriage be made betwéen them, and that may be a perpetual Covenant of peace. Also he asketh homage and tribute, which it is good to fulfil. Then the K. sent his Messengers to the Emperor, saying: that he would fulfil his desire in all things, if it might please his Highnes, that his Son and the Kings Daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the Emperor, yet he sent again, saying: If his Daughter were

a clean Virgin from her birth unto that day, he would conſent to that marriage. Then was the King right glad, for his Daughter was a clean Virgin.

Therefore when the Letters of Covenant and compact were ſealed, the King furniſhed a fair ſhip, wherein he might ſend his daughter, with many Noble Knights, Ladies, and great Riches unto the Emperor, for to have his Son in marriage.

And when they were ſailing in the Sea towards Rome, a ſtorm aroſe ſo extreamly & ſo horribly, that the ſhip brake againſt a Rock, and they were all drowned, ſave onely the young Lady, which fixed her hope and heart ſo greatly on God, that ſhe was ſaved, and about three of the clock the tempeſt ceaſed, & the Lady drove forth over the waves in that broken ſhip which was caſt up again: but a huge Whale followed after, ready to devour both the ſhip and her. Wherefore this young Lady when night came, ſmote fire with a ſtone wherewith the ſhip was greatly lightened, and then the Whale durſt not adventure toward the ſhip for fear of the light. At the Cock crowing, this young Lady was ſo weary of the great tempeſt and trouble of Sea, that ſhe ſlept, and within a little while after the fire ceaſed, and the Whale came and devoured the Virgin. And when ſhe awaked and found

her self swallowed up in the Whales belly, she smote fire, and with a knife wounded the Whale in many places, and when the Whale felt himself wounded, according to his nature he began to swim to Land.

There was dwelling at that time in a Country near by, a noble Earl named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the Sea shore, saw the Whale coming towards the Land, wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither again, and fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the Maiden that was in his belly cryed with an high voice, and said: O gentle friends, have mercy and compassion on me, for I am a Kings Daughter, and a true Virgin from the hour of my birth to this day. When the Earl heard this, he wondred greatly, and opened the side of the Whale, and found the young Lady, and took her out, And when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose Daughter she was, and how she had lost all her goods in the Sea, and how she should have been married unto the Emperors Son. And when the Earl heard this, he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was well refreshed. And in the mean time he sent Messengers to the Emperor, letting him

to know how the Kings Daughter was ſaved.

Then was the Emperor right glad of her ſafety and coming, and had great compaſſion on her, ſaying: Ah good Maiden. For the love of my Son thou haſt ſuffered much woe: nevertheleſs, if thou be worthy to be his wife, ſoon ſhall I prove. And when he had thus ſaid he cauſed three Veſſels to be brought forth: the firſt was made of pure Gold, well beſet with precious ſtones without, and within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was engraven this Poſie: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall find that he deſerveth. The ſecond Veſſel was made of fine ſilver, filled with earth & worms, the Superſcription was thus: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall finde that his nature deſireth. The third Veſſel was made of Lead, full within of precious ſtones, and thereupon was inſculpt this Poſie: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall finde that God hath diſpoſed for him. Theſe three Veſſels the Emperor ſhewed the Maiden, and ſaid: Lo, here Daughter, theſe be rich Veſſels, if thou chuſe one of theſe, wherein is profit to thee and to others, then ſhalt thou have my Son. And if thou chuſe that wherein is no profit to thee, nor to any other, ſoothly thou ſhalt not marry him.

When the Maiden heard this, ſhe lift up her hands to God, and ſaid: Thou Lord, that knoweſt all things, grant me grace this hour ſo

ſs to chuſe, that I may receive the Emperors Son. And with that ſhe beheld the firſt veſſel of Gold, which was engraven royally, & read the ſuperſcription: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall find that he deſerveth: ſaying thus: though this veſſel be full precious, and made of pure Gold, nevertheleſs, I know not what is within, therefore my dear Lord, this veſſel will I not chuſe.

And then beheld ſhe the ſecond veſſel, that was of pure ſilver, and read the ſuperſcription: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall finde that his nature deſireth: Thinking thus within her ſelf, if I chuſe this veſſel, what is within I know not, but well I know, there ſhall I find that nature deſireth, and my nature deſireth the luſt of the fleſh, and therefore this veſſel will I not chuſe.

When ſhe had ſeen theſe two veſſels, and had given an anſwer as touching them, ſhe beheld the third veſſel of Lead, and read the ſuperſcription: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall find that God hath diſpoſed: Thinking within her ſelf, this veſſel is not very rich, nor outwardly precious, yet the ſuperſcription ſaith: Whoſo chuſeth me, ſhall find that God hath diſpoſed: and without doubt God never diſpoſeth any harm, therefore by the leave of God this Veſſel will I chuſe.

When the Emperor heard this, he ſaid: O

fair Maiden open thy vessel, for it is full of precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young Lady had opened it, she found it full of fine gold and precious stones, as the Emperor had told her before. Then said the Emperor: Daughter, because thou hast well chosen, thou shalt marry my Son. And then he appointed the wedding day, and they were married with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their lives end.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokens the Father of Heaven, who was long time without a natural Son, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in Hell. The Empresse conceived when the Angel Gabriel said: Lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a Childe. And then the Firmament began to clear when this little Childe lightened the world with his birth. The Moon began to wax pale, when the face of the Virgin Mary was over-shadowed by vertue of the Holy God, and not only her face was thus shadowed, but also her body, for she was conceived with childe as another woman, wherefore Joseph would have forsaken her privily and gone away. This little Bird that came from the one side of the Moon betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who at midnight was born of the Virgin Mary, wrapped

in cloathes and laid in an Oxe ſtall. The two Beaſts betoken the Oxe and the Aſs, that Joſeph brought with him, which honours him in his birth. Theſe other beaſts that came from far, betokeneth the Shepherds in the field, to whom the Angel ſaid thus: Lo, I ſhew you great joy. The Birds that ſung ſo ſweetly, betokeneth the Angels in Heaven, which ſung at his birth this joyful Song: Glory be to God above, and peace to men on earth.

The King of Ampluy, which held war againſt the Emperor, betokeneth all mankind, that were contrary to God, as they were in the Devils power. But immediately, when our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was born, he bowed himſelf to God, and beſought him of peace, when he received his baptiſm, for at our baptiſm we promiſed to draw onely to God, and forſake the Devil and all his pomp. The King gave his Daughter in marriage to the Emperors Son; Right ſo every one of us ought to give his Soul in marriage to Gods Son, for he is alwaies ready to receive our Soul as his Spouſe; according to the Scripture, ſaying thus: I will marry thee to me. But ere our Soul may come to the Palace of Heaven, ſhe muſt ſail by the Sea of the world, in the ſhip of good life: but oftentimes there ariſeth a tempeſt in the Sea, that is; trouble of this World, the temptations of the fleſh, and the

ſuggeſtion of the Devil ariſeth ſuddenly, and drowneth the vertues that the ſoul received in Baptiſm; nevertheleſſe yet falleth ſhe not out of the ſhip of Charity, but kæpeth her ſelf ſurely therein by Faith and Hope. For as the Apoſtle ſaith, By hope we be ſaved. For it is impoſſible to be ſaved without Hope or Faith. The great Whale that followeth the Maiden betokens the Devil, which by night and by day, lieth in wait to overcome the ſoul by ſin: Therefore do we as the Maiden did, ſmite the fire of Charity and Love out of the ſtone, that is Chriſt, according to this ſaying, I am a ſtone, and certainly the Devil ſhall have no power over us: Many men begin well, as did the Maid, but at laſt they be weary of their good works, and ſo they ſlæp in ſin: And anon when the Devil perceiveth this, he devoureth the ſinner in his evil thoughts, delights, conſent and works. Therefore if any of us fæl our ſelves in ſuch wiſe under the power of the Devil, let him do as the Maiden did, ſmite the Devil with the knife of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of Charity, and without doubt he ſhal caſt thæ on the land of good life.

The Earl that came with his ſervants to ſlay the Whale, betokeneth a diſcræt Preacher, dwelling beſide the Sea, that is, beſide the world, and not in the world, that is, not drawn to worldly delectation, but ever ready with

good

good words of holy Scripture to kill the Devil, and to destroy his power. We must all cry with an high voice as the Maiden did, acknowledging our sins, and then shall we be delivered from the Devil, and nourished with vertuous exercise.

The Emperor sheweth this Maiden three Vessels, that is, God putteth before man, life and death, good and evil, and which of these he chosen he shall obtain. Therefore saith Solomon, death and life is set before man, chuse which him list. And yet man is uncertain whether he will chuse life or death.

By the first vessel of gold, full of dead mens bones, is understood mighty worldly rich men, who shine like Gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world, nevertheless within they be full of dead mens bones, that is, the works they have done in this world, be dead in the sight of God through deadly sin. Therefore if any man chuse such a life, he shall have that he deserveth, that is, such men be like unto Tombs, that be white and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloath of gold and silk, but within there is nothing but dry bones.

By the second vessel of silver, we ought to understand some Justices and wise men of this world, who shine in fair speech, but within they be full of worms and earth, that

is,

is, their fair ſpéech ſhall avail them no moze at the day of Judgement, than the wozms of the Earth, and peradventure leſſe, foz then ſhall they ſuffer everlaſting pain, if they dye in deadly ſin.

By the third veſſel of Lead, full of gold and pzecious ſtones, we are to underſtand a ſimple and powz life, which the choſen ſouls chuſe, that they may be married to our bleſſed Lozd Jeſus Chziſt by humility and obedience, and ſuch men bear with them pzecious Stones, that is, Faith, and her fruitful wozks pleaſing to God: by which at the judgement day, they be eſpouſed to our Lozd Jeſus Chziſt, and obtain the Heritage of Heaven. Unto the which bzing us our Saviour Jeſus Chziſt that died on the Czoſſe. Amen.

The Argument.

Man by Baptiſm promiſed to live in the fear of God, and forſake the Devil. Chriſt forroweth for our ſins, he requireth dutiful ſervice of us in ſix ſeveral ages, but we are alwaies unready for him, yet the mercy of God is favourable towards us, that he ſpareth even till the laſt age of Man, vouchſafing if then we repent us, and call for grace, believing in his mercies, to receive us into the Throne of his heavenly Grace.

The 33. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Calapodus, who took a fair Lady to his Wife. They were not long together before that this Empresse conceived, and bare him a Son, a goodly childe and a fair. When he was of age, he was set to Schwl, and when he came to twenty years of age, he desired his Fathers Heritage, saying: Dear Father, you are an old man, and may not govern your Empire, therefore if it please you to give it me, it shall be to your ease. Then answered the Emperor and said: Dear Son, I dread me sore, that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfil my will or my desire.

Then answered the Empress (for so much as she loved her Son better than her Husband) and said: My Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one Son, therefore I believe he will fulfil thine intent in all things: This Empire may help him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperor and said: I will first have of him a Letter Obligatory, that whensoever he doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire, without any contradiction.

The Son granted this, and did make the Obligation, and sealed it. And when this

was

was done, this young Emperor waxed ſo proud, that he feared neither God nor man, and did very much harm. But his Father ſuffered it patiently, for he would be corrected by no man.

Now at laſt there fell a great dearth in the Empire, ſo that many men dyed for want of food: this old Emperor was all alone himſelf, and began to have need, wherefore he went to his Son to have ſome maintenance, which his Son granted and ſuffered, for a time. But within ſhort time his Father began to wax ſick, wherfore he called his Son, & prayed him to give him a draught of his Muſt. His Son anſwered and ſaid: That wil I not do, for my Muſt is not good for your complexion. Then ſaid the Emperor, I pray thee give me a draught of thy wine. His ſon anſwered and ſaid, That he ſhould have none, for my wine is not yet fined, and if I touch it, it will trouble, and therefore I will not broach it, till it be cleared and fined. Then ſaid his Father, Give me ſome of the third Tun. That will I not do (quoth he) for that wine is not good for a ſick man. Then his father prayed him heartily for a draught of the fourth Tun. Then anſwered he and ſaid: Thereof get ye none, for it is feeble and without any ſuſtentation, and ſuch wine is not good for you, for it is not comfortable. Then ſaid his Father, now

good Son give me the fifth Tun. That will I not, quoth he, for that Tun is full of lees and dregs, and ſuch as is not fit for men, nor ſcarcely for hogs.

When his Father ſaw he might get nothing of him, after he was perfectly well, he went to the King of Jeruſalem, and made his complaint of his Son, and ſhewed him the Letter Obligatory, which his Son had made, whereby his Father might put him out of his Empire without any gain-ſaying. When the King heard this, he called the Emperors Son to anſwer his Father: And when he came, he could not anſwer to his Father with any reaſon, wherefore the King put him out of his Empire, and ſeated his Father therein again: and ſo he continued all the daies of his life.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, according to that ſaying: Is not he thy Father that hath brought thee up? he he hath made thee, &c. Deut. 32. 6. The Son betokneth man, to whom he gave all the Empire of this world, according to the Scripture; Heaven he hath given to our Lord, and Earth to man. Mankinde made an Obligation with our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when he received the Sacrament of Baptiſme, wherein he promiſed to ſerve him truely: and forſake

the

the Devil and all his pomp and vain glory. This Emperor began to wax sick on a day, ℔ is, our Lord Jesus Christ is troubled as oft as a Christian sinneth and breaketh his Commandements, wherefore he thirsts greatly for the help of our Souls, and he asked a draught of the first Tun, that is, he asketh of man the first age of his childhood to be spent in his service, but incontinently the wicked childe answereth and saith, I may not do so, for my childehood is Must, that is, it is tender and so young, that it may not attempt so soon to serve God: which is manifestly against the truth, for the childe of one day is not without sin. For St. Gregory in his Dialogues saith: The children of five years of age drive out Spirits from the bosomes of their Fathers. Then when God seeth that he cannot have of the Must, of his Childehood, then he desireth wine of the second Tun. Then answereth the wicked youth, and saith: that his Wine is not apt to serve God. And when God may not have the second Tun, then asketh he of the third Tun, that is, of the third Tun of his youth. Then answereth the wicked young man, and saith: The wine is very strong and mighty, and therefore his youth ought to be spent about manly deeds in this world, and not in good life, which would make him feeble and weak. When God seeth that he may

not

not have of this Tun, Then asked he of the fourth Tun. And then answereth the wicked man in his manhood, and saith that aged men are feeble, and may not fast nor do any hard repentance, and if he did, he should be the cause of his own death; Then asked our Lord of the fifth Tun, that is of his old age, when he stoopeth, & may not go without a staff. But the wicked old man excuseth himself, and saith that his wine is too feeble to give to such a feeble man, for if he should fast one day, it were time to morrow to make his grave. And when our Lord seeth that he may not have of the fifth Tun, then asked he of the sixth Tun, that so when a man is blinde and may go to sin no more, yet desireth he of such a man drink, that is, help of his Soul: But the wretched man lying in despair saith: Alas, alas, woe to me, because I served not almighty God my Maker, and Redeemer here in times past, while I was in youth and in prosperity: now there is nothing left, but only the lees and dregs of wretchedness, therefore what shall it avail me now to turn toward God. But for such men we should lament.

Nevertheless God is merciful, that though he might have no service of man in all his time, yet he is content to have the lees of his Tun, that is, the good will, though he doth not serve him otherwise, and so shall his good

will

will ſtand him in ſtead of godly Life. For in what hour the ſinner doth repent him of his ſin, from the bottom of his heart, he ſhall be forgiven, as Ezekiel witneſſeth. But there be many that will give no Wine, nor no other thing to him, wherefore Chriſt ſhall complain to the King of Jeruſalem, that is, to the God-head, at the judgement day, and then as he is God and man, ſhall he give ſentence definitive againſt ſuch men: ſaying, I have hungred, and ye gave me no meat, I have been naked, and ye cloathed me not: I have thirſted, and ye gave me no drink. Lo, thus ſhal he rehearſe to the the fruits of thy faith. And when this is done, then ſhall ſuch men be put to everlaſting pain, and the juſt man into everlaſting bliſſe. Unto the which bring us, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being captivated by Satan, the world refuſeth to do for him, till the God-head of the Heavenly Father, bearing an earneſt affection unto him, did eſpouſe him, and embrace him within the boſome of inward and entire love, adventuring what he might to ſet all mankinde at liberty, yet grudgeth the World that we ſhould alwaies ſerve our God, and forſake her: but to eſchew all ſuch malignity we are taught in this Hiſtory.

The 34. Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a mighty Emperor, Named Anthony, under whoſe reign

reign the Rovers of the Sea had taken Prisoner a mighty mans Son of another Region, and brought him to the Emperors Prison being bound. When this Young-man was thus in Prison, he incontinent wrote to his Father for his Ransom, but he would neither pay his Ransom, nor send him any thing for to comfort him: This when he heard, he wept sore, and would not be comforted for the unkindnesse of his Father.

This Emperor had a fair Daughter, which visited every day the Prisoner, and comforted him as much as she might, wishing him to be merry. To whom the Prisoner answered and said: How shall I be merry? or how may I joy, thus to lye fast bound in Prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this, it grieveth me most that my Father will not pay my Ransome.

When the Maiden heard this, she was moved with pity, and said: Dear Friend, I am sorry for thée, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thée from thy anguish and pain. What thing is that: (quoth he) That thou wilt take me for thy Wife; then said the Prisoner, I promise you surely to fulfil your request and desire, and for the more assurance I plight you my troth. When he had so done, shortly after the Damsel delivered him out of Prison,

and fled away with him home to his Fathers Houſe.

When his Father ſaw his Son and the Maiden together, he asked the cauſe why he brought the Maiden with him: Then ſaid his Son: Sir this Damſel delivered me out of Priſon, and therefore ſhe ſhall be my Wife. Then ſaid his Father, I will not conſent that ſhe ſhall be thy wife for two reaſonable cauſes, which I ſhall forthwith ſhew thee.

The firſt is this, it is not unknown to thee, that the Emperor her Father might have had for thy deliverance great plenty of riches, and forasmuch as ſhe was untrue to her own Father, and true to thee, it ſeemeth wel, that thou ſhouldeſt not truſt long to her: for being falſe to her own Father, it is to be feared ſhe will not be true to another man.

The ſecond reaſon is this: the cauſe why ſhe delivered thee out of Priſon, was neither for pity nor for love, but for carnal luſt that ſhe had to thee. For at thy deliverance ſhe made covenant with thee to be thy Wife, and had of thee thy troth, and hath accompanied with thee: therefore ſon (ſaith he) it is no reaſon that ſhe ſhould be thy Wife.

The Maiden anſwered to theſe objections, and ſaid: As for the firſt reaſon that thou layeſt againſt me, that I ſhould be untrue to my Father, that is falſe; For my Father hath

plenty

plenty of riches, and thy Son is but poor, and therefore I helpt him for pity, and for none other cause, and nevertheless, thou that art his father would not pay his ransom, that he might be delivered out of Prison. Loe, for this cause I have delivered him, therefore I am kinder to him, than thou that art his own Father, and he is more beholding to me, than to thee.

Unto the other reason: Whereas thou sayest that I delivered him because of carnal lust: I answer, and say plainly, that it is not truth; for all manner of carnal love is caused of strength and beauty, but thy Son is neither strong nor beautiful, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength and beauty, for by the pain he hath had in prison, he is brought low, and made unlusty to sport, and therefore pity only moved me to deliver him, and not carnal lust.

Then said the Son: Dear Father, for as much as I was in peril of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransome, that I might be delivered, and you would not help me, but this gentle Damsel for pity hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of Prison, therefore surely she shall be my Wife. So forthwith he married her with great honour, and with her ended his life.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The young man which was taken with the Pirats of the Sea, betokens all mankind, which was taken with the Devil, by the ſin of our forefather Adam, and was caſt into the Priſon of Hell with great ſorrow and pain. His Father would not ranſome him, that is the world would do nothing for him.

This fair Daughter betokeneth the Godhead, which came down from Heaven, and took manhood of the Virgin Mary, and ſo made a Ghoſtly marriage betwéen him and Man: and upon this condition he delivered mankind out of the Priſon of Hell, when he came from Heaven and forſook the fellowſhip of Angels. for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of tears. But the Father, that betokeneth the World, grudgeth ever againſt him, and would not ſuffer that the Soul of man ſhould become the Spouſe of Jeſus Chriſt, but that ſhe ſhould alway ſerve him, and ſhould forſake our Lord.

Therefore if we follow the world and its vanities, certainly we ſhal fall into the ſnare of the Devil. From the which defend us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

It is the Ordinance of God, that no man ſhall labour for worldly promotion by covetouſneſs and falſhood, nor by deceit or other evil courſes. Man for his firſt tranſgreſſion ſhould have been adjudged to perpetual torment in Hell, had not the Son of God voluntarily offered himſelf to the death to ſave mankinde, and deſtroy Satan his Enemy, ſo that thereby he might live with him in the habitation of Heaven everlaſtingly.

The 35. Hiſtory.

SOmetime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperor of great livelyhood, named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the vertus of bounty; wherefore he ordained a Law for great charity, that no man under pain of death ſhould turn a Plaice in his diſh at his meat, but only eat the white ſide, and not the black; and if any man would attempt to do the contrary, he ſhould ſuffer death without any pardon: but yet ere he dyed, he ſhould ask three Petitions of the Emperor what him liſt (except his life) which ſhould be granted him.

It befel after upon a day, that there came an Earl and his Son, of a ſtrange Country, to ſpeak with the Emperor; And when the Earl was ſet at meat, he was ſerved with a Plaice, and he which was an hungry, and had an appetite to his meat, after he had eaten the white ſide, he turned the black ſide, and began to eat

thereof: wherefore straightway he was accused to the Emperor, because he had offended against the Law. Then said the Emperor; Let him dye according to the Law without any delay.

When the Earls Son heard that his Father should dye, immediately he fell down on both his knees before the Emperor, and said: O my reverend Lord, I most humbly entreat you, that I may dye for my Father. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me wel so that one dye for the offence. Then said the Earls Son, sith it is so, that I must dye, I ask the benefit of the Law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I dye. The Emperor answered, and said: Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay.

Then said this young Knight: my Lord, you have but one Daughter, the which I desire of your Highnesse, that she may lye one night with me before I dye. The Emperor granted for fulfilling of the Laws, though it were against his will. Nevertheless this Knight defloured her not as that night: therefore he greatly pleased the Emperor.

The second Petition is this: I ask all thy treasure, & immediately the Emperor granted, because he would not be called a breaker of the Law. And when the Earls Son had received the Emperors treasure, he imparted it

it both to poor and to rich, by means whereof he obtained their good wills.

My third Petition is this: I ask my Lord that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my Father eat the black side of the Plaice. And they þ saw him turn the Plaice, bethought them, and said within themselves: if we acknowledge that we saw him do this trespass, then shall our eyes be put out: and therefore it is better that we hold us still; And so there was none found that would accuse him.

When the Earls Son heard this, he said to the Emperor: My Lord (quoth he) ye see there is no man accuseth my Father, therefore give me rightful Judgement. Then said the Emperor: Forasmuch as no man wil acknowledge that they saw him turn the Plaice, therefore I wil not that thy Father shall die. So thus the Son saved his Fathers life, and after the decease of the Emperor, married his Daughter.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokneth the Father of Heaven, which ordained a Law, that no man should turn the black side of a Plaice; that is, there should no man labour for riches and promotion by covetousnesse and falshood. The Earl that came to the Emperor betokeneth Adam our fore-Father, who

came out of the Land of Eden, and turned up the black side of the Plaice, when he ate of the Apple of the forbidden tree; wherefore he should have been condemned to everlasting death: but his Son, that betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, he took the flesh of Adam, and proffered himself voluntarily to dye for him: and the Father of Heaven granted that he should go down to dye for mankinde.

Nevertheless, before he dyed, he asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven; The first was this: That he might have by him his Daughter, which betokneth the Soul of man, and bring her with him into the bosome of Heaven, according to the words in Hosea, saying: I will wed her to my self.

The second Petition was this: all the Emperors treasure, which betokneth the treasure of Heaven, according to this Scripture, Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you.

The third Petition is this: that all their eyes should be put out, that is, that the Devil and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of Heavenly Grace.

And thus saved he mankinde, and led him up with him unto the Palace of Heaven. Unto the which Palace, bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Father of Heaven of his meer Grace promoteth some poor men, raising them from the dust, to sit among Princes, but they extolling themselves without regard of Gods goodness, they are again made abject by him. The Devil worketh deceit in his members against the godly; Christ came down from Heaven to minister the water of eternal Life unto man, and by his Death and Passion to revive our Souls (which before were dead) unto the firm state of eternal felicity, to purchase happiness with his precious blood.

The 36. History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, named Leonicius, who on a day rode to a Forrest to disport himself, where he met suddenly with a poor man, to whom he said thus: Friend, what art thou? and whence comest thou?

My Lord (quoth he) I am come from the next City, and I am your man. Then said the Emperor, thou seemest poor, therefore if thou be honest and true, I will promote thee to great riches & honour. Then answered the poor man, and said: my Lord, I promise you faithfully to be true to you as long as I live. The Emperor anon made him a Knight, and gave him great riches. When he was thus promoted, he waxed so proud, that he thought himself more able to be an Emperor than his Lord; wherefore he made suggestion to divers

Lords

Lords of that Empire, that he might usurp and take upon him through strength of them to be Emperor.

When the Emperor heard this, anon he exiled him, and all those that were consenting to him, so they lived objects in great wretchedness and sorrow: and then the Emperor ordained other men in their stead, and gave them all the possessions of these Traitors.

And when the banished men heard that strangers had taken possession of their Lands and goods, anon they conspired against them, and through treason requested them to a banquet. And they as innocents, thinking upon no such treason, came at the day assigned, and were served with five poysones messes, whereby as many as tasted of those dishes, dyed incontinent.

When the Emperor heard this, he was greatly moved, and assembled his counsel to inquire what was best to be done for this treason, and for their death. Then said the Emperors Son: My Lord, I am your Son, and you are my Father, and therefore I shall give you good counsel profitable to all men. Not far hence is a little Nation, wherein dwelleth a Fair Maiden, and a gracious in the sight of every man, which hath an Orchard wherein is a well, the water whereof is of such vertue, that if it be cast upon a dead man, straight-

straightway he shall live again & recover his life. Therefore my Lord, I shall descend unto that Nation, & seek that water, whereby they that were slain at the Banquet, may be restored again to life. And when the Emperor heard this, he greatly rejoyced, and said thus: Son, thy counsel is good.

And straightway the Emperors Son went into the said Nation and fell in conceit with the Maiden, insomuch that he entred into the Garden, and assailed to taste the water of the Well. And when he had so done, he made five deep trenches in the ground, in the which the water ran til it came where the dead men lay buried, hereupon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperors Son with great joy led them unto his Father: And when the Emperor saw this he was right joyful, wherefore he crowned his Son with a Laurel Crown in token of victory, and so ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The poor man that was promoted, betokeneth Lucifer, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of Heaven with great joy and clearnesse; but through his pride he thought he might be like unto the Almighty God, and not only like him;

him, but more than Almighty God: wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that conſented to him, to Hell: and in his place man was exalted to great joy and honour. The Devil ſeeing this, it much grieved him, that man ſhould come to ſuch Glory and Honour, and bade Adam and Eve to a Banquet, when they did eat of the Apple againſt Gods Commandement, and counſelled them thus, ſaying: In what hour ye eat of this Apple, ye ſhall be like Gods, knowing good and evil. And at this curſed Banquet, they were ſerved with five Meſſes that were poyſoned, that is, their five Wits were accorded in eating of the Apple, whereof man was infected and dyed. This hearing the Emperors Son, Chriſt Jeſus, moved with mercy, he came down from Heaven into this world, and acquainted him ſo well with the bleſſed Virgin Mary, that he found in her the Well of manhood, and conſoyned it to the Godhead, according to the Scripture: I am the Well of Life, who drinketh of me ſhall not thirſt. After that, he ſuffered to be made five trenches in the ground, that is, five wounds in his body, out of the which ran both blood and water, whereby all mankinde was raiſed from death to life, and led them up into the Palace of Heaven, unto the which bring us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The father of heaven extendeth his goodnes divers ways towards frail man, yet he taketh contrary ways, living in spiritual fornication, for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, he is compelled to lead a miserable and painful life. But being reconciled by the death of his Saviour, he possesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity.

The 37. History.

Somtime in Rome there raigned a mighty Emperor named Dunstanus, in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle Knight that had two Sons. One of his Sons matched himself against his Fathers will with a common Harlot. The Knight hearing this exiled his Son from him; and when he was thus exiled, he begot on this woman a Son: and son after that he waxed sick, and in penury, wherefore he sent Messengers to his Father, beseching him of his Mercy: this hearing his Father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefore he was reclaimed from banishment; And when he was thus brought again to his Fathers grace, he gave his childe which he had by the common woman to his Father, who kindly received him and nourished him as his Son.

When the other Son heard this, he said to his Father: Father, quoth he, it seemeth to

me

me that you are out of your right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For he is out of his right minde that receiveth a false Heir, and nourisheth him, whose Father hath endamaged and grieved him before. Now my brother which begat this Child, hath done you great injury, when he married the Common Woman, against your will and commandement, therefore methinketh that you are out of your right minde.

Then answered his Father, and said; because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkinde to thy own brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship for evermore, but sothly, no unkinde man shall have Heritage except he be reconciled, and yet thou never reconciledst thy self to him, for thy unkindeneſſe, for thou mightest have reconciled thy self to him, but thou wouldest not, therefore of my Heritage getteſt thou no part.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, the Father of these two brethren, betokeneth the Father of Heaven. And his two Sons betoken the nature of Angels, and the nature of Man: For man was married to a common woman, or Harlot, when he eat the Apple against the Commandement of God, wherefore he was exiled by the Father of Heaven, and put from the joyes of Paradise,

Paradise. The Son of the common woman betokeneth mankinde. This Knights Son, that is Adam, lived in great misery, for after his sin, he was put from joy into this wretched valley of tears & weeping, according to the Scripture, In the sweat of thy brows, thou shalt eat thy bread. But after, by the passion of Christ he was reconciled. But the other Son, that betokeneth the Devil, was ever unkinde, and grudged daily against our reconciling, saying: that by reason of sin we ought not to come unto the Heritage of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

We ought in every vocation and calling to behave our selves justly, and to use the poor man with equity: we must not injure rich men. The mighty men are to be honoured, and not defrauded of their dignity and estate, being men of sincere life: they that do contrary to the meaning of dutiful behoof herein, are worthy of everlasting death.

The 38. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Donatus, which did make three Images, of the which one held out his hand straight unto the people, and had on his finger a ring of Gold. The second Image had a beard of Gold. And the third had a Mantle of Gold, Commanding upon pain of death, that

that no man ſhould take away from theſe Images, the Ring, the Beard, nor the Mantle.

It befel afterward upon a time, that one Dionyſe a tyrant, came into the Temple, and took away the Ring from the firſt Image, the Beard from the ſecond, and the Mantle from the third. And when he had thus done, he was forthwith accuſed unto the Emperor, and brought before him, and ſtrictly examined of that treſpaſs, why he diſpoiled the Images againſt the Emperors commandement.

Then anſwered Dionyſe, and ſaid as followeth: My reverend Lord, it is lawful to anſwer for my ſelf. When I entered into the Temple, the firſt Image held forth his hand ſtraight to mée, as who would ſay, I give thée this Ring, and therefore I took the Ring as the gift of the Image, being loth to refuſe ſo gentle an offer. And when I ſaw the ſecond Image having a Beard, I thought thus with my ſelf: I knew ſometime the Father of the Image, which had no Beard, and now his Son hath a Beard, which is againſt reaſon, the Son to have a Beard, and the Father none; and therefore I took from him his Beard, that he ſhould be like his Father. After that, when I ſaw the third, having a Mantle of gold, I thought the Mantle of

gold

gold was not behodal for him in Winter; for gold is naturally cold, which might be cause of his death, and therefore I took it from him, because it was to cold in Winter, and to hot in Summer.

When Dionyse had excused him by these reasons, the Emperor answered and said: Thou hast answered wickedly for thy self: What should cause thée rather than any other man to dispoil the Images, for as much as I commanded that no man should take any thing away from them, therefore thine own mouth hath condemned thée. Anon the Emperor called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to smite off his head, and incontinently he took him, and did unto him as the Emperor had commanded, and so he dyed a shameful death.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth Almighty God the Father of Heaven. The three Images betokeneth the poor men, the rich men, and the mighty men of this world. The tyrant Dyonyse betokeneth all officers in every estate, lewdly behaving themselves, which take away from poor men the Ring of their fingers, and say thus: I may take that is given me: For when the poor man hath ought to do, he must néeds put forth his hand to give whether he will

or no, if he would speed. They take away the Beard from the rich man, and say thus: This man is richer than his Father was, therefore take we his Knelyhood from him, and make him like his Fore-father. They take also the Mantle of Gold from the mighty man: when they see any man of honour and good living, willing to correct such open mis-doers, then say they, this man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our opinions, and also he is too hot in power and working against us, therefore go we and take from him the Mantle of might, and so they accuse him and put him out of his Office. But certainly all such men stand in peril of everlasting death: From the which save us, he that shed his precious blood for us, Amen.

The Argument.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart, by Faith, and fruits of good Life: The reward of such as have care unto the Commandements and Institutions of God. We must watch lest we fall into temptation: These things considered, we shall then by Gods gracious good Providence, attain unto the reward of Heavenly and Everlasting Blis.

The

The 39. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Emilius, who had a fair young Lady to his Wife, upon whom he had begotten a fair Son. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperor and besought him to have the keeping of his Son. Immediately the Emperor sent a Herauld throughout the City, proclaiming, that in whose House were first found fire and water, the good man of that House should have his Son in keeping, and to nourish. Anon, then the Emperor made a Proclamation, that whosoever had his Son to keep, should nourish him cleanly, and feed him with wholsome meats, and drinks. And when the Childe came to Age, then should the Keeper be promoted to great honour: Wherefore many men made ready fire and water, in hope to have the Childe: But in the night, when every man was asleep, there came a Tyrant, named Sulapius, that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheless, among all other, there was a man, named Jonathas, that laboured so diligently, that he kept both day and night fire and water.

In the morning early, the Herauld at the

Emperors commandment, went through the City, and sought in every House for fire and water, but he could finde none till he came to Jonathas House where he found both fire and water ready, wherefore he was brought before the Emperor, who delivered him his Son according to the Proclamation.

When Jonathas had the Emperors Son, he led him home unto his House. And soon after he sent for Masons and Carpenters, and did make a strong Chamber of lime and stone. And when the Chamber was finished, he sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the Chamber, ten Images, with this Posie painted above their heads, Whoso defileth these Images shall die a cruel death. And then caused a pair of Gallows to be drawn on the dore, and figured a man hanging thereupon, with this posie painted above his head So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperors Son amiss. Also he caused a Chair of Gold to be made, and himself sitting therein crowned with a crown of Gold, with this superscription above the head: Who so nourisheth the Emperors Son cleanly thus shall he be honoured.

When this was done, oftentimes as he was a sleep, he was greatly tempted to defile these then excellent Images: but anon he read

read the superscriptions above their heads, and then all the temptations ceased. And when the Emperors Son was evilly kept, then he went to the Gallows, and read that Posie which was written above his own head, and for dread thereof kept the Childe better, and was diligent to give attendance on him.

And when he beheld the chair, and himself sitting therein crowned with a Crown of gold, he was right joyful, thinking to have good reward for keeping of the Emperors Son. When the Emperor heard of this diligent demeanor about his Son, he sent for him and thanking him for his well keeping and nourishing of him, he after promoted him to great honour and dignity.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven, the Empresse betokeneth the blessed Virgin Mary; The Emperors Son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ; The Herauld that was sent throughout the City, betokeneth Saint John Baptist, who was sent before our Lord to prepare the way to him, according to the holy Scripture: Lo I send mine Angel before me, &c. The States that desired the Emperors Son to

nouriſh, betokens the Patriarchs and Prophets, which deſire greatly to nouriſh our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and alſo to ſée him, but they might not ſée him, nor nouriſh him, for fire and water which ſhould have bén cauſe of their ſight, was not with them perfectly.

The fire betokneth the Holy Ghoſt, which had not yet appeared to them, for they were not waſhed with the water of Baptiſm. Alſo, ye may underſtand by the fire, perfect Charity, and by the water, true Contrition, which do now adayes fail in many men, and therefore they may not have the little Childe Jeſus in their hearts.

Jonathas that watched ſo diligently betokeneth every good Chriſtian man, which ſtudieth either to watch in well-doing, yielding to God for ſins, the fire of charitable Repentance, and the water of Contrition. But oftentimes the Tyrant, which betokeneth the Devil, putteth out the fire of Charity out of mens hearts, and caſteth out the water of Contrition, ſo that they may not nouriſh the little Childe Jeſus. Therefore let us watch as Jonathas did, that we enter not into temptation. And call we unto Maſons, that is, diſcréet Preachers, which can make in our hearts a Chamber of ſtone, that is, a ſure Faith and Hope.

Then

Then call we to us Painters, that is, Ministers of Gods Word, which can Paint in our hearts ten Images, that is, the ten Commandements, which if thou kæp and observe daily, without doubt thou shalt be honoured in Heaven.

And if thou kæp well the Emperors Son, thou shalt sit in a Chair of Gold, Crowned with a Crown of Gold. And if that thou nourish him not well, without doubt thou shalt be in danger of torment in Hell. From the which preserve us our blessed Saviour Jesus.

The Argument.

The Soul of man espoused unto Christ, the Flesh procureth the same to sin. The Christian Soul by Faith, withstandeth temptation. The Redemption of mankinde from Sin and Death. The deceits of unthankful hearts. The Spirits health, the defects of the Flesh. After a pure Repentance followeth perpetual Joy and Felicity both of Soul and Body.

The 40. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, Named Manelay, which had wedded the Kings Daughter of Hungaria, a fair Lady and a gracious in all her works, especially she was Merciful. On a time, as the Em-

peroꝛ lay in his bed he bethought him that he would go viſit the Holy Land. And on the moꝛꝛow he called to him the Empꝛeſſe his Wife, and his own onely Bꝛother, and thus he ſaid: Dear Lady, I may not noꝛ will not hide from you the pꝛivities of my heart: I purpoſe to viſit the Holy Land, wheꝛefoꝛe I oꝛdain thée pꝛincipally to be Lady and Goveꝛneſſe ouer all my Empire, and all my people; and under thée I oꝛdain here my Bꝛother to be thy Steward, foꝛ to pꝛovide all things that may be pꝛofitable to my Empire and my people.

Then ſaid the Empꝛeſſe: ſith it will no otheꝛwiſe be, but that nédes thou wilt go to viſit the City of Jeruſalem, I ſhall be in youꝛ abſence as true as any Tuꝛtle that hath loſt heꝛ Mate, foꝛ as I believe, ye ſhall not eſcape thence with youꝛ life.

The Emperoꝛ anon comfoꝛts heꝛ with fair woꝛds, and kiſſed heꝛ, and after that took his leave of heꝛ and all other, and went toward the City of Jeruſalem.

And anon after the Emperoꝛ was gone his Bꝛother became ſo pꝛoud, that he oppꝛeſſed poꝛ men, and robbed rich men: and he did woꝛſe than this, foꝛ he daily ſtiꝛred the Empꝛeſſe to commit ſin with him: But ſhe ever anſwered again as an holy and devout woman, and ſaid: I will (quoth ſhe) never conſent

conſent to you nor to any other as long as my Lord liveth, nevertheleſſe this Knight would not leave with this anſwer, but ever when he found her alone, he made his complaint to her, and ſtirred her by all the waies that he could to ſin with him.

When this Lady ſaw that he would not ceaſe for any anſwer, nor would not amend himſelf: When ſhe ſaw her time, ſhe called to her three or four of the worthieſt men of the Empire, and ſaid to them thus: It is not unknown to you, that my Lord the Emperor ordained me principal Governour of this Empire, and alſo he ordained his Brother to be Steward under me, and that he ſhould do nothing without my Counſel, but he doth all the contrary: for he oppreſſeth greatly poor men, and likewiſe robbeth the rich men; and yet he would do more than this, if he might have his intent; wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you binde him faſt, and caſt him into Priſon.

Then ſaid they, ſoothly he hath done many evil deeds ſince our Lord the Emperor went, therefore we be ready to obey your Commaundements, but in this matter you muſt anſwer for us to the Lord our Emperor.

Then ſaid ſhe: Dread ye not, if my Lord knew

knew what hée had done as well as I, hée would put him to the foulest death that could be thought: Immediately these men laid hands on him, and bound him fast with Iron Chains, and put him in Prison, whereas he lay long time after, till at the last, it fortuned, there came tydings that the Emperor was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his Brother heard of his coming, he said, would to God my Brother might not finde me in Prison: for if he do, he will inquire the cause of my imprisonment of the Empresse, and she will tell him all the truth, how I moved her to commit sin, and so for her I shall have no favour of my Brother, but lose my life, this know I well: therefore it shall not be so. Then sent he a Messenger unto the Empress praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the Prison-dore, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The Empresse came to him, and enquired of him, what he would have. He answered, and said: O Lady, have mercy upon me, for if the Emperor my Brother finde mée in Prison, then shall I dye without any remedy.

Then said the Empresse: if I might know that thou wouldest be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou shouldest finde grace. Then

did

did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his Trespasse. When he had thus promised, the Empresse delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his state, and then she said unto him thus: Now good Brother take thy Steed, and come with me, that we may meet my Lord. He answered, and said: Lady, I am ready to fulfil your will and commandement in all things; and then the Empresse took him with her, and many other Knights, and so rode forth to meet the Emperour: and as they rode together by the way, they saw a great Hart run before them, wherefore every man with such Hounds as they had, chased him on Horseback, so that with the Empresse was left no creature, save onely the Emperors Brother, who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said unto the Empresse: Lo Lady, here is beside a private Forrest, and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love, come now and consent unto me, that I may lie with thee.

Then said the Empresse: Ah fool, what may this be? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again; wherefore I say now unto thee, as I have said before, there shall no man do such

a thing

thing with me, save onely my Lord the Emperor, which ought of very duty for to do. Then said he, if thou wilt not consent to me, I shall hang thée here upon a trée in this Forrest, where no man shall finde thée, and so shalt thou dye an evil death. The Empresse answered méekly, and said, Though thou smite off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torments, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin.

When he heard this he uncloathed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the hair upon a trée, and tyed her Steed before her, and so rode to his Fellows, and told them that a great Host of men met him, and took the Empresse away from him, and when he had told them this, they made all great sorrow.

It befel on the third day after, there came an Earl to hunt in that Forrest, and as he rode beating the bushes, he unkennels a Fox, whom his Hounds followed fast till they came near the trée where the Empress hanged. And when the Dogs smelt the savour of her, they left the Fox, and ran towards the trée as fast as they could.

The Earl séing this, wondred greatly, and spurring his horse, followed them till he came where the Empresse hanged. When the Earl saw

saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for as much as she was right fair and beautiful to behold, wherefore he said unto her in this manner wise: O Woman who art thou, and of what Country? and wherefore hangest thou here in this manner.

The Empress that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, answered and said, I am quoth she, a strange woman, and am come out of a far Country, but how I came hither God knoweth. Then answered the Earl and said, whose Horse is this that standeth by thee bound to this tree? Then answered the Lady and said that it was hers. When the Earl heard this, he saw well that she was a Gentlewoman and come of noble linage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pity, and said unto her: O fair Lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischief, if thou wilt promise to go with me, and nourish my fair young Daughter, and teach her at home in my Castle, for I have no childe but only her, and if thou kéep her well thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: As far forth as I can or may, I shall fulfil your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the kéeping of his

Daugh-

Daughter, that he loved so much, and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the Earls Chamber, and his Daughter with her: and in the Chamber every night there burned a Lamp, which hanged betwéen the Empresses bed and the Earls bed. This Lady behaved her self so gently, that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Earls House a Steward, which much loved this Empresse, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him again, and said: Know ye, dear friend, for a certainty, that I will never love any man in such manner wise, but only him whom I am greatly bounden to love by Gods Commandement.

Then said the Steward: Then thou wilt not consent unto me? Sir, quoth she, what néd you any more to ask such things? The Vow that I have made, I will truly kéep, and hold by the Grace of God.

And when the Steward heard this, hé went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himself, if I may, I shall be revenged on thé.

It befel upon a night within short time after, that the Earls Chamber dor was forgotten and left unshut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all asléep, he went and spyed by the light of the

the Lamp where the Empresse and the young Maiden lay together, and with that he drew out his Knife, and cutting the throat of the Earls Daughter, and put the Knife into the Empresses hand, she being asleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent, that when the Earl awaked, he should think that she had cut his daughters throat, and so would she be put to a shameful death for his mischievous deed. And when the Damsel was thus slain, and the blody Knife in the Empresses hand, the Countesse awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the Lamp, the blody Knife in the Empresses hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the Earl: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderful thing.

The Earl awaked, and looked toward the Empresses bed, and saw the blody Knife, as the Countesse had said: wherefore he was greatly moved, and cryed to her, and said: awake woman out of thy sleep, what thing is this that I see in thy hand: Then the Empress through his cry awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the Knife fell out of her hand, and with that she looked by her, and found the Earls Daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blod, wherefore with an high voice she cryed, and said: Alas, alas, and woe is me, my Lords Daughter is slain.

Then

Then cryed the Countesse unto the Earl with a pitious voice, and said: O my Lord let this Devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which thus hath slain our onely Childe.

Then when the Countesse had said thus to the Earl, he said to the Empresse in this wise, The high God knoweth that thou mischievous woman hast slain my Daughter with thine own hands, for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt dye a foul death. Then said the Earl in this wise: O thou woman, were it not, I dread God greatly, I should cleave thy body with my Sword in twoparts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my Daughter; neverthelesse for me thou shalt have no harm, therefore go thy way out of this City, without any delay, for if I finde thee here after this day, thou shalt dye a most cruel death.

Then arose this woful Empresse, and did on her cloathes, and after leapt on her Palfray, and rode toward the East alone without any safe conduct, and as she rode thus mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way a pair of Gallows, and seven Officers leading a man to be hanged, wherefore she was moved with great pity and smote her Horse with her stick, and rode

to

to them, praying them she might redéem that mis-doer if he might be saved from death by any means.

Then said they, Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redéem him. Anon the Empresse accorded with them, and payed his Ransome, and he was delivered.

Then said she to him: Now my good friend be true unto me till thou dye, sith I have delivered thée from death.

On my soul (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, he followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a City, and then said the Empresse to him: good friend quoth she, go forth thy way afore me into the City, and sée thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest a while. Her man went forth as she commanded, and took up her a good lodging, and an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the City perceived her beauty, they wondred greatly, wherefore many of them craved of her unlawful love, but all was in vain, for they might not spéd in any wise.

It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a Ship full of Merchandise, and arrived in the Haven of that City. When the Lady heard this, she said unto her Servant:

Go to the ship and see if there be any cloath for my use.

Her servant went forth to the ship, where as he found many very fine cloaths: wherefore he prayed the Master of the Ship, that he would come into the City and speak with his Lady. The Master granted him, and so the servant came home to his Lady before, and warned her of the coming of the Master of the Ship. Soon after the Master of the Ship came and saluted her courteously: and the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him that she might have for her money such cloath as might be profitable for her wearing. Then he granted that she should have any thing that liked her, and soon they were agréed, wherefore the Servant went immediately again with the Master of the ship for the cloath. And when they were both within on Ship-board, the Master said to the Ladies servant: My dear friend, to thée I would open my minde, if I might trust to thée, and if thou help me, thou shalt have of me a great Reward.

Then answered he and said: I shall (quoth he) be sworn to thée to kéep thy counsel and fulfil thine intent as far forth as I can.

Then said the Master of the Ship, I love thy Lady more than I can tell thée, for her beauty and feature is so excellent

that

that I would give for the love of her, all the gold that I have: and if I may obtain the love of her through thy help, I will give thée whatsoever thou wilt desire of me.

Then said the Ladies servant: tell me by what means I may best help thée. Then said the Master of the Ship, go home to thy Lady again, and tell her, that I will not deliver to thée the cloath except she come her self, and do thou but bring her to my Ship, and if the Wind be good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away. Thy counsel is good, quoth the Ladies Servant, therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfil thy desire.

Now when he had received his reward, he went again to the Lady, and told her, that by no means the Master of the Ship would deliver him the Cloath, except she came her self.

The Lady believed her Servant, and went to the Ship. Now when she was within the Ship-board, her Servant abode without.

When the Master saw that she was within the Ship, and the wind was good, he drew up the Sail, and sailed forth.

When the Lady perceived this, thus she said to the Master: O Master (quoth shée)

what reason is this that thou hast done to me? The Master answered and said: Madam, certainly it is so, that I must nedes lie with thée, and afterward espouse thée. O good Sir quoth she, I have made a vow, that I shall never do such a thing but with him unto whom I am bound by right, and by the Law. Sothly quoth he, if you will not grant me with your good will, I will cast you out into the midst of the Sea, and there shall ye die an evil death; if it be so quoth she, that I must nedes consent, or else dye, first I pray thée to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfil thine intent ere I dye; and also I pray thée, that I may say my Prayers unto the Father of Heaven, that he may have mercy on me.

The Master believed her, wherefore he did ordain her a Cabbin in the end of the ship. Wherein she knéled down on both her knées and made her prayers, saying on this wise: O thou my Lord God, thou hast kept me from my youth in cleannesse, kéep me now that I be not deflowred, so that I may ever serve thée with a clean heart and minde, and let not this wicked man prevail with me, nor any other the like wickednes come nigh me. When she had ended her prayers, there arose

suddenly

suddenly a great Tempest in the Sea, so that the ship all brast, and all that were therein perished save the Lady, and she caught a Cable and saved her self, and the Master caught a board of the Ship, and saved himself likewise: nevertheless she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. The Lady landed in her own Empire near to a rich City, wherein she was honourably received, and she lived so holy a life that God gave her grace and power to heal sick folk of all manner of diseases, wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked blinde and lame, and every man through the grace of God, and her good endeavour was healed, wherefore her name was known through divers Regions. Nevertheless she was not known as the Empresse. At the same time the Emperors Brother (that had hanged her before by the hair) was smitten with a foul Leprosie. The Knight that slew the Earls Daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand was blinde, deaf, and had the Palsie. The Thief that betrayed her to the Master of the ship was lame and full of the cramp. And the Master of the ship distraught of his wits.

When the Emperor heard that so holy a woman was in the City, he called his brother, and said to him thus: Go we, dear

brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this City, that she may heal thée of thy Leprosie. Would to God, O noble Brother (quoth he) that I were healed. Anon the Emperor with his brother went toward the City. Then when the Citizens heard of his coming, they received him honourably with procession and all provision fitting his estate. And then the Emperor enquired of the Citizens, if any such holy woman were among them, that could heal sick folk of their diseases. The Citizens answered, and said, that such an one there was. Now at the same time, was come to the same City, the Knight which slew the Earls Daughter, and the Thief which she saved from the Gallows, and the Master of the Ship to be healed of their diseases.

Then was the Empress called forth before the Emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the Emperor her husband should not know her, and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state; and again he in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady, if thou list of thy kindness to heal my brother of his Leprosie, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thée for thy reward.

When the Empress heard this, she looked

about

about her, and saw there the Emperors brother a foul Leper, she saw there also the Kt. that slew the Earls Daughter, blind and deaf, the Thief that she saved from the Gallows Lame, and also the Master of the Ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, & knew her not, but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperor thus: My reverend Lord, though you would give me all your Empire, I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evil they have done.

When the Emperor heard this, he turned him towards his brother, and said unto him: Brother, acknowledge openly thy Sin before all these men, that thou mayest be healed of thy sickness. Then anon he began to tell how he had led his life, but he told not how he had hanged the Empress in the Forrest by the hair of the head most despightfully.

When he had acknowledged all that him list, the Empresse replied and said: Sothly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession.

The Emperor hearing this, he turned

towards his Brother, and said in this wise: what evil, sorrow, or other unhappy wretchedness is in thee, wost thou not how that thou art a foul Leper? therefore acknowledge thy sin truely, that thou mayest be whole, or else avoid my company for evermore.

Ah my Lord quoth he, I may not tell my life openly, except I be sure of thy grace. What hast thou trespassed against me, said the Emperor? Then answered his brother, and said: Mine offence against thee is grievous, and therfore I ask thee heartily forgiveness. The Emperor thought not on the Empresse, forasmuch as he supposed she had been dead many years before, therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empresse to commit Adultery with him, and because she denied, he had hanged her by the hair in the Forrest on such a day.

When the Emperor heard this, he was almost beside himself, and in his rage he said thus: O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned thee, thou shouldest dye the most shameful death that could be thought.

Then

Then said the Knight that slew the Earls Daughter, I wot not quoth he, what Lady you mean, but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and he took her, and gave her his Daughter to kæp, and I provoked her as much as I could to sin with me, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the Earls Daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloody knife in the Ladies hand, that the Earl should think that she had slain his daughter with her own hand, and then was she exiled thence, but where she became I wot not.

Then said the Thief: I wot not of what Lady ye mean but well I wot, that seven Officers were leading me to the Gallows, and such a Lady came riding by, and bought me of them, and then went I with her, and afterwards I betrayed her unto the Master of the Ship.

Such a Lady quoth the Master of the ship received I, and when we were in the middest of the Sea, I would have lain with her, but she knæled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship all to brast, and all therein was drowned save she and I, but afterward what befell of her, I wot not.

Then

Then cried the Empresse with a loud voice, and said: Soothly dear friends, ye do now truely confess and declare the truth, wherefore, I will now apply my Medicine, and anon they received their healths.

When the Lady the Empresse had thus done, she uncovered her face to the Emperor, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her, and embraced her in his arms, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly: saying, Blessed be God, now I have found that I desired. And when he had thus said he led her home to the palace with great joy, and after, when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. This Emresse betokeneth a holy soul: This Emperors brother betokeneth the flesh, to whom our Lord hath given charge of the Empire, but most principally to the soul; Nevertheless, the wretched flesh oft provoketh the Soul to sin, but the Soul that loveth God above all things, withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her ghostly power, that is, Reason, Will, Understanding, and Conscience, and maketh them

them to imprison the flesh, that is disobedient to the Soul, in the Prison of true repentance, unto the time it obey Reason in all things.

And thus in hope of mercy he sinneth again: to whom the holy Writer saith, Cursed be the man that sinneth in hope. And at the last the soul inclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of Repentance, and washeth him from the filth of sin, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leap on the Palfray of charitable humility, and so rideth forth to mæt our Lord with the sacrifice of thanksgiving. But alas, oft the sinner trespasseth against holy Scripture, wherefore the heart, that is, the lust of the flesh, ariseth before him, and after runneth great hounds, that is, evil thoughts, and so long they chase, till the body and the soul be left alone, and then the flesh stirreth that pure soul being the Spouse to Almighty God: but the pure and undefiled soul, that is so well beloved with God, will not forsake our Lord, and consent to Sin: wherefore the wretched Flesh full oft despoileth her of her cloathing, that is, of her vertues, and hangeth her up by the hair on an Oak, that is, on lusts, and delights, and there she hangeth till the good Carl cometh, that is, a discreet Preacher in the Forrest of this world,

no

to preach and teach the Word of God: then he taketh her down, and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nourish his Daughter, that is, to nourish Conscience with fruitful faith. The Earl had in his Chamber a Lamp: right so every discréet Preacher should have before him the Lamp of holy Scripture, where by he may sée both the grievance and profit of the Soul in learning vertues, and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sin, is nought else but the pride of life, which is Steward of this world; by whom many men are deceived. But when the Soul that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sin of pride, then taketh this evil Steward the Knife of Covetise, wherewith he slayeth the Earls Daughter, that is, Conscience, according to the Scripture, saying: Gold and Silver hath blinded the eyes of Judges, and hath overthrown wise men, so that equity and righteousnes might not enter, but stood afar, and turned their backs. This Lady also redéemed a man from death; that is, from everlasting death which he hath deserved by deadly sin: Therefore do we as this Lady, smite we our horse that is our flesh, with the spurs of repentance, and so ride we forth in all haste to save our neighbor from the sink of deadly sin, to help him both bodily and ghostly, as Solomon saith.

Woe

Woe to that man that lyeth in deadly sin, that hath no man to lift him out thereof. Therefore awake thy Neighbour and help. For a Brother that is holpen of another, is like a sure City, and if he give but a Cup of cold water in the way of help, he shall not lose his Reward.

But many now adaies be very unkinde, as was the Thief which deceived the Lady, after that she had saved him from hanging.

The Master of the ship betokeneth the World, by whom many men be deceived. But nevertheless, as oft as a man taketh on him voluntarily the Commandements of God, and forsaketh the World, then breaketh he the ship. For it is impossible to please God and man, and the world, all at one time.

When this Lady had escaped the tempest of the Sea, she went to a City, that is, the Soul after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there she healed all manner of sick folk, that is, every man that is troubled in his soul, that is infected with divers sicknesses, those that his Lady healed through holy life, But they could not be healed till they had first confessed their sins to the Empresse, the Church of God, and then she healeth them by repentance and amendment

of

of life: yet all this while was the Empresse unknown to her Husband, that is, the Church wandreth in the wilderness of this wicked world, until God by miraculous means made her known unto him, and so led her home by victory and triumph in the truth, unto the heavenly habitation of eternal rest and glory: Unto the which Almighty God bring us all for his Sons sake. Amen.

The Argument.

Every supream Magistrate and other inferiour, to be honored and reverenced. Every true Christian ought to consider his duty herein, and every false Christian perverting the waies of the godly: reward of such is laid up in Hell, but the just shall inherit the blessed life everlasting.

The 40. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Martin, which for entire affection kept with him his brothers son, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt also a Knight that was Steward of the Empire, and Unkle unto the Emperor, which envied this Fulgentius, studying day and night how he might bring the Emperor and this youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperor, and said

ſaid my Lord, quoth he, I that am your true ſervant, am bound in duty to warn your Highneſs, if I hear any thing that toucheth your Honour, wherefore I have ſuch things that I muſt néds utter it in ſecret to your Majeſty betwéen us two: Then ſaid the Emperor, gód friend, ſay on what thée liſt.

My moſt dear Lord (quoth the Steward) Fulgentius your Couſin and your nigh kinſman, hath defamed you wonderfully, and ſhamefully throughout all your Empire, ſaying that your breath ſtinketh, and that it is death to him to ſerve your Cup. Then the Emperor was grievouſly diſpleaſed, and almoſt beſide himſelf for anger, and ſaid unto him thus: I pray thée gód friend tell me the very truth, if that my breath ſtinketh as he ſaith. My Lord (quoth the Steward) ye may believe me, I never perceived a ſwéeter breath in my daies than yours is. Then ſaid the Emperor: I pray thée gód friend, tell me how I may bring this thing to gód proof.

The Steward anſwered and ſaid: My Lord (quoth he) ye ſhall right well underſtand the truth, for to morrow next when he ſerveth you of your cup, ye ſhall ſée that he will turn away his face from you, becauſe of your breath, and this is the moſt certain proof that may

be

be had of this thing. Uerily quoth the Emperor, a truer proof cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when the Steward heard this, he went ſtraight to Fulgentius, and took him aſide ſaying thus: Dear friend, thou art near Kinſman, and alſo Nephew unto my Lord the Emperor, therefore if thou wilt be thankful unto me, I will tell thée of a fault whereof my Lord the Emperor complaineth oft, and thinks to put thée from him (except it be the ſooner amended) and that will be a great reproof to thée. Then ſaid this Fulgentius: Ah good Sir, for his love that dyed upon the Croſſe, tell me why my Lord is ſo ſore moved with me for I am readie to amend my fault in all that I can or may. and for to be ruled by your diſcréet counſel.

Thy breath (quoth the Steward) ſtinketh ſo ſore, that his drink doth him no good, ſo grievous unto him is the ſtinking breath of thy mouth. Then ſaid Fulgentius unto the Steward: Truely, that perceived I never till now; but what think ye of my breath, I pray you tell me the very truth? Truly (quoth the Steward) it ſtinketh greatly and foul: And this Fulgentius believed all that he had ſaid, and was right ſorrowful in his minde, & prayed the Steward of his counſel & help in this woful caſe. Then ſaid the Steward unto him

if

if that thou wilt do my counsel, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion, wherefore do as I shall tell thee.

I counsel thee for the best, and also warn thee, that when thou servest my Lord the Emperor of his cup, that thou turn thy Face away from him, so that he may not smell thy stinking breath, until the time that thou hast provided thee of some remedy therefore.

Then was Fulgentius right glad, & sware to him that he would do by his counsel.

Not long after it befel, that this young man Fulgentius served his Lord as he was wont to do, and therewith suddenly he turned his face from the Lord the Emperor, as the Steward had taught him.

And when the Emperor perceived the avoiding of his Head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd Harlet; now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore go thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoided the place, and went out of his sight.

And when this was done, the Emperor called unto him his Steward, and said: How may I rid this Harlet from the World, that thus hath defamed me? My most dear Lord,

quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent.

For here beside, within this three miles, ye have brick-makers, which daily make great fire, for to burn Brick, and also they make Lime, therefore my Lord, send to them this night, charge them upon pain of death, that whosoever cometh to them first in the morning, saying to them thus: My Lord commandeth them to fulfil his will: that they take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he go early in the morning to your workmen, and that he ask them, whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not, and then shall they (according to your Commandment) cast him into the fire, and thus shall he dye an evil death.

Surely (quoth the Emperor) thy counsel is good, therefore call to me that Harlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperors presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and go to the burners of Lime and Brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sun rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalf that they fulfil my Commandement, or else they shall dye a most shameful death.

Then

Then spake this Fulgentius: My Lord, if God send me my life I shall fulfil your will were it that I go to the worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, he could not slæp for thought, that he must rise early to fulfil his Lords commandement. The Emperor about midnight sent a Messenger on horseback unto his Brick-makers, commanding that upon pain of death, that whosoever came to them first in the morning, saying unto them (as is before rehearsed) they should take him and binde him, and cast him into the fire, and burn him to the bare bones.

The Brick-makers answered and said, it should be done. Then the Messenger returned home again, and told the Emperor that his commandement should be diligently fulfilled.

Early in the morning following, Fulgentius arose and prepared him toward his way, and as he went he heard a Bell ring to Service, wherefore he went to hear Service, and after the end of Service he fell aslæp, and there slept a long while so soundly, that the Priest nor none other might awake him.

The Steward desiring inwardly to hear of his death, about two of the clock he went unto the workmen, and said unto them thus: Sirs (quoth he) have ye done the Emperors commandement or no?

The Brick-makers answered him, and said: No truely, we have not yet done his Commandment, but it shall be done, and with that they laid hands on him. Then cryed the Steward, and said: God Sirs save my life, for the Emperor commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death. Then said they, the Messenger told us not so, but he bade us, that whosoever came first in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him, and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him to ashes: and with that they threw him into the fire.

And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: God Sirs, have you done my Lords Commandement, yea, sothly said they, and therefore go ye again to the Emperor, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius: For Christs love tell me that commandement.

We had in commandement said they, upon pain of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace: But before thee, came the Steward and therefore have we fulfilled on him the Emperors commandement, now he is burnt to the bare bones.

When Fulgentius heard this, he thanked God, that he had so preserved him from death; there-

therefore he took his leave of the workmen, and went again to the Palace.

When the Emperor saw him, he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus he said: Hast thou been with the Brick-makers, and fulfilled my commandment? Sothly my gracious Lord I have been there, but ere I came there, your commandement was fulfilled: How may that be true quoth the Emperor.

Forsoth said Fulgentius, the Steward came to them afore me, and said that, I should have said, so they took him and threw him into the Furnace, and if I had come any rather, so would they have done to me, and therefore I thank God, that he hath preserved me from death.

Then said the Emperor, tell me the truth of such questions as I shall demand of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Emperor: you never found me in any falshood, and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such a death for me? For well ye know, that I am your own brothers Son. Then said the Emperor to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for that death I ordained for thee through counsel of the Steward, because thou didst defame me throughout all my Empire, saying: that my breath did stink so grievously, that it was death to thee, and in token thereof, thou

turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me of my Cup, and that I saw with mine eyes; and for this cause I ordained for thée such a death, and yet thou shalt dye, except I hear a better excuse.

Then answered Fulgentius, and said: Ah dear Lord, if it might please your Highness for to hear me, I shall shew you a subtil and deceitful imagination. Say on quoth the Emperor.

The Steward (quoth Fulgentius) that is now dead came to me and said, that ye told unto him that my breath did stink; and thereupon he counselled me, that when I served you of your Cup, I should turn away my face, I take God to witnesse I lye not.

When the Emperor heard this, he believed him, and said: O my Nephew, now I sée, through the right wise judgement of God, the Steward is burnt, and his own wickednesse and envy is fallen on himself, for he ordained this malice against thée, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God that hath preserved thée from death.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth every supream Magistrate and Fulgentius his Nephew betokeneth every true Christian man,

man, which ſhould truely ſerve them with faithful loyalty, like as Fulgentius ſerved the Emperor at his cup, wherefore he ſhall be greatly loved of God. This Steward betokeneth every falſe Chriſtian man, as Cain, which oftentimes turned the heart of right wiſe men from God, ſaying that his breath ſtinketh; that is, that the life of this Magiſtrate is not acceptable to God or man, which is againſt the Scripture which ſaith, Judge not, & ye ſhal not be judged. But oftentimes ſuch malicious people accuſe righteous men, wherefore they ſhall be caſt into the everlaſting fire of Hell, where is wailing & weeping, and miſery without end. But the righteous ſhall aſcend to everlaſting life. Unto the which bring us, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

Tyrants and ungodly perſons walk without knowledge of the Truth, till they come to the Church of God, the wicked perſecute the Godly, but as they are preſerved by the mighty providence of God, ſo they ought not to ſleep in ſin. A figurative ſpeech of three ſeveral meanings, viz. Take, Yield, and Flee: the ſignification therefore.

The 42. Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſomtime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Delphinus, which had

no Children ſave only a Daughter which was a fair creature, and well beloved of her Father.

As this Emperor rode on a day on Hunting in the Forreſt ſuddenly he rode out of his way, and loſt his men, wherefore he was greatly diſcomforted, for he wiſt not whither he rode, nor in what place he was; till at the laſt when he had thus ridden all the day alone, in the evening he ſaw a Houſe, and thither he rode a great pace, and knocked at the Gate: immediately the good man of the Houſe heard him, and asked the cauſe of his knocking, and what he would have? Dear friend quoth the Emperor, loe it is night, as ye may ſee: Therefore I deſire of you a lodging for the Love of God.

When he had thus ſaid, the good man of the Houſe, unawares that he was the Emperor, anſwered and ſaid: Good friend (quoth he) I am the Emperors Foſter, and have plenty of Veniſon, and other victual for you: When the Emperor heard this, he was right glad in his minde, nevertheleſſe, he told him not that he was the Emperor. Then the Foſter opened the Gate, and received him as he could, and ſet him to ſupper, and ſerved him worthily. And when he had ſupped, the Foſter brought him to his Chamber, and when time was he went to bed.

In

In the same night it befel, that the Fosters Wife did travel of a childe in another Chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly Son. And as the Emperor lay in his bed sleeping, him seemed he heard a voice saying to him thrice these words: Take, take, take; And with that he awoke, and marvelled greatly what it might be, saying to himself thus: A voice biddeth me Take, take, take, What shall I take? And immediately he fell asleep again.

And the second time he heard a voice saying unto him these words, Yeild, yield, yield. And with that he awakened again, and wondered greatly, saying unto himself: What may this signifie? First I heard a voice that said, Take, take, take; and nothing I received: and right now I heard another voice that said, Yield, yield, yield; What should I yield.

And as he lay thus thinking with himself, he fell asleep again. And then he heard the third voice, saying these words thrice: Flee, flee, flee, For this night is a Childe born, that after thy decease shall be Emperor. When the Emperor heard this, he awakened, and wondered greatly what it might be.

In the morning following, the Emperor called to him the Foster, and said: Dear friend I pray thee tell me, if any childe be born here about

about this night to thy knowledge. My wife quoth the Foster, this night is delivered of a Son. I pray thée said the Emperor, shew me thy Son. When the Emperor had séen the Childe, he saw a mark in the Childes visage, whereby he might know him another time, and he said to the Foster, thus:

Dear friend, knowest thou who I am? Nay sothly, quoth the Foster, for I never saw you before this time, as far as I can remember, nevertheless it séemeth that ye be a Gentleman. Then answered the Emperor and said: I am the Emperor your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: Wherefore I give thée hearty thanks. This hearing the Foster, he fell down upon both his knées, at his fét, and besought him of Mercy, if that he had offended his Highnes in any thing. Then answered the Emperor, and said: Be thou nothing afraid, for I thank thée heartily for thy good chear, and thy Son that was born to night. I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I will send for him.

O my gracious Lord quoth the Foster, it is not that such a noble Emperor should nourish the Childe of his Subject and Servant: nevertheles your will be fulfilled, and when your Messengers come, I shall deliver them my Son.

Then the Emperor took his leave, and rode home

home to his Palace, And shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, & said unto them thus: Go ye unto my Foster, with whom I was lodged such a night in the Forrest, and receive of him his Son, of which his wife was delivered that night, and upon pain of death, I command you, that you slay him by the way, and cast his flesh to the Dogs, but bring with you the heart to me: and except ye fulfil my commandement, ye shall dye the cruellest death that can be thought. Anon his Servants went to the Forrest, and received the Fosters Son, and brought him with them, and when they were come near unto the Palace, one of them said: How shal we do that we may fulfil our Lords commandement in slaying of this childe? Some answered and said, that ỳ childe should be slain, and some would have his life saved & while they were thus striving among themselves, one of them that was most merciful, said unto the rest: O my good loving friends, hear my counsel, I beseech you, and ye shall not repent you thereof. If we murder this innocent child, we shall greatly offend Almighty God: And behold hereby are young Pigs, kill we one of them, and then we may take with us his heart, and present it unto the Emperor, saying ỳ it is the Heart of the young Child. Then said they, thy counsel is good, but

but what shall we do with the Childe: God friend (quoth he) let us wrap it in some cloathes, and lay him in some hollow tree, for peradventure God will help him, and save his life.

When he had thus said, they did after his counsel in all things, and killed a Pig, and went their way, and carried home with them the Pigs heart to the Emperor, saying unto him thus: Loe gracious Lord, we have destroyed the Childe, as ye commanded us, and with that they shewed him the Pigs heart. The Emperor supposing it had bæn the Childes heart took it, and cast it into the fire despightfully, saying: Loe, there is the heart of him which should have bæn Emperor after me; Loe, what it is to believe in dreams, which be but fantasies & vain things.

The same day after the Childe was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earl to hunt in the Forrest, and as his Hounds chased an Hart, they came to the hollow tree, where the childe lay, and when they smelt the savour of the Childe, they would go no further. The Earl seeing this, marvelled why his Hounds abode there, and smote his Horse with his spurs, he rode a great pace till he came into them. And when he came unto the Tree wherein the Childe was laid, he loked in at a hole, and saw there the Childe lying, and

then

then he was right glad, and tok the Childe up in his arms full lovingly, and bare it home to his Castle, saying unto the Countesse his Wife: Los my dear wife, this day by fortune I have found a very fair Childe in a hollow tree as I Hunted in the Forrest, whereof I am right glad: And because thou never yet conceivedst a Childe, therefore I exhort thee that thou wilt faign thy self to travail with Childe, and say that thou hast born this Childe, the Countess fulfilled gladly the Earls desire, and said: My most dear Lord, your will in this thing shall be done.

Not long after, this news went throughout all the Country, that the Countess was delivered of a fair Son, wherefore every man rejoyced much.

The Childe began to grow, and was well beloved of every man, and especially of the Earl and the Countesse. It befel when the Childe was fifteen years of age, the Emperor made a solemn feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Earl was called, who at the day assigned came, and brought his Son with him, which was at that time a fair young Squire, and he carved at the board before the Earl. The Emperor stedfastly beheld him, and espyed the token in his forehead, which he had seen in the Fosters House, wherwith he was greatly moved with-

within himſelf, and ſaid unto the Earl in this manner. Whoſe Son is this? Certes, ſaid the Earl, he is my Son. Then ſaid the Emperor, By the Faith that thou oweſt to me tell me the truth.

The Earl ſeeing that he might not excuſe himſelf, but that needs he muſt tell him the truth, told how he found him in a hollow Tree. This hearing the Emperor, he was diſtract of his wits for anger, and called to him his Servants, which he had ſent before to deſtroy the Childe. And when they came before him, he made them to ſwear that they ſhould tell him the truth what they had done with the Child.

Gracious Lord ſaid they, we yeild us unto your Grace and gwdneſs, for pitty ſo moved us, that we might not deſtroy him, but we put him in a hollow Tree: what befel of him afterward, certainly we know not, and in his ſtead we killed a Pig, and brought the heart thereof unto you.

When the Emperor heard the truth of the matter, he ſaid unto the Earl: This young man (quoth he) ſhal abide with me: The Earl immediately granted, though it was greatly againſt his will.

When the Feaſt was ended, every man took his leave of the Emperor, and went wherras they liſt. And at that time it fortuned,

ned that the Empresse and her Daughter sojourned in another Country far from thence by the Commandment of the Emperor.

Not long after the Emperor said unto this young Squire, it behoveth thée to ride unto the Empresse my Wife with my Letters. I am ready at your Commandement my Lord, said he, to fulfil your desire. Immediately the Emperor wrote Letters, the intent whereof was this: that the Empress should take the bearer of these Letters, and let him be drawn at the Horse tail, and after that she should let him be hanged till he be dead, & that on pain of death. When ỳ Letters were all sealed, the Emperor gave them unto the young Squire, commanding him to spéed him on his journey. And straightway the young Squire put them close into a box, and rode forth on his journey. When he had ridden thrée or four daies on his journey, in an evening he came unto a Castle where dwelt a Knight, and gently desired of him a nights lodging.

The Knight beholding the swéet favour of the young Squire, made him good chéer, and afterward brought him into his Chamber, and when he was there, he went to bed, and immediately fell asléep, for he was full weary of his journey, and forgot his box with the Letters lying openly in his Chamber.

When the Knight saw the box, he opened

it

it, and found the Letters ſealed with the Emperors ſign Manual, & was greatly tempted to open them, and at the laſt he opened them neatly, and then read how the Empreſſe upon pain of death ſhould put the bearer of them to death; and then he was right ſorrowful, and ſaid within himſelf: Alas (quoth he) it is great pity to ſlay ſo fair and proper a man, and immediately after, the Knight raced out that writing, & wrote in the ſame place, theſe words following: Upon pain of death, I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of theſe Letters, and let him be weded without any delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all Honour and Solemnity that can be thought; and when they be married, that ye make as much account of him, as if he were your own Son, and that he ſupply my room till I come unto you my ſelf.

When the Knight had thus written, he cloſed the Letters neatly, and put them into the box again. Early in the morning the young Squire aroſe, and haſtily made ready, and took his leave of the Knight, and rode forth on his journey, and the third day after he came unto the Empreſſe, and ſaluted her Dutifully in the Emperors behalf, and gave her the Letters. When the Empreſs had read them, anon ſhe ſent forth her Meſſengers through the Country, commanding

manding the States and and Gentlemen to come unto her Daughters wedding on a day assigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire espoused the Emperors daughter with great honour, according to the tenor of the Letters, and was much honoured among the people.

Not long after it befel, that the Emperor came into the country, & when the Empress heard of his coming, she took with her her Son in Law with much other people and went to welcome the Emperor. When the Emperor saw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, he was greatly moved within himself, and said, O thou cursed woman, because thou hast not fulfilled my commandment thou shalt dye an evil Death.

O my dear Lord (quoth she) all that you commanded me to do I have fulfilled. Nay cursed woman said the Emperor, it is not so, for I wrote to thee that thou should put him to death, and yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the Empress, you wrote to me that I should give him your Daughter to Wife, and that on pain of death, in witness whereof, loe here your letters sealed with your own Seal Manual.

When the Emperor saw this he wondred

greatly and said, Is he then espoused to my daughter? Yea surely said the Empress, long ago with great solemnity, and as I perceive your daughter is with child. Then said the Emperor: O Lord Jesus, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance, therefore sith it is so, thy will must nèds be fulfilled. And with that he took his Son in Law in his arms and killed him, which after his Death was Emperor, and ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor may betoken Herod, who would have slain the Child Jesus, wherefore he sent Messengers to sèk him; according to the Scripture, shewing how he commanded thrée Kings to sèk him, & bring him tidings again where he was, that he might come and worship him also. The Foster betokeneth Joseph our Ladies Husband, which kept him: but when the thrée Kings came they slew him not, but worshipped him on their knées, and left him in the hollow trée of his God-head. The Earl that found this Child, betokeneth the Holy Ghost which warned Joseph by the Angel in his slèep, that he should take our Lady and her Son and flée into Egypt.

By the first take may be understood the great benefit that he gave thée, when he gave

thée

thée a soul made to his own similitude. By the second take is understood, the Son of God, which was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. By the third take is understood the same Son of God which died upon the Cross.

By the first yeild is understood that we ought to yeild our soul unto Almighty God, as clean as he gave us it after our regeneration in Baptism. By the second yeild, that we ought to yeild honour, worship and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third yeild, that we ought to yeild to God true confession of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life.

The first flee betokeneth sin, which we should flée: the second flee betokeneth the world, which we should flée, for the great temptations that are therein. The third flee betokeneth everlasting pain, the which we ought to flee through faith, by the which we may come to everlasting bliss: unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus, Amen.

The Argument.

The soul of man being ravished by the Tyranny of sin, she complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetual joy for her. Christ receiveth patient sinners to his mercy by his death and passion.

The 43. Hiſtory.

There dwelt ſomtime in Rome, a mighty Emperor, named Sontaſinus, which ordained a Law, that whoſoever Raviſhed a Virgin ſhould die, and if ſhe were reſcued, then he that reſcued her, ſhould have her to wife, if him liſt: and if he would not marry her, then ſhe ſhould be eſpouſed by his appointment. It befel on a day, that a Tyrant named Poncianus, led a Virgin into a Forreſt and defloured her of her Maiden-head. And when he had ſo done, he would have ſlain her, and as he was deſpoiling her of her Clothes, there came riding by the Forreſt a Gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damſel, wherefore he rode a great pace into the Forreſt to ſeek what it might be. Now when he came, he ſaw a woman ſtanding all naked, ſave onely her ſmock, to whom the Knight ſpake: Art thou ſhe (ſaid he) that cryd ſo lamentably: Then anſwered the Damſel: Yea certainly, for this man that ſtandeth here hath raviſhed and defloured me of my Maiden-head, and now he would ſlay me, & therefore he hath deſpoiled me of my clothes: for the love of God gentle Knight help me now. Then ſaid the Tyrant, ſhe lyeth, for ſhe is my wife, and I have found her in Adultery with another

another man, therefore I will slay her. Then said the Knight, I believe better the woman than thée, for loe the tokens appear openly in her visage, that thou hast ravished her, therefore wil I fight with thée for her deliverance. And immediately they buckled both together and fought eagarly till they were both sore wounded. Nevertheless, the Knight obtained the Victory, and put the Tyrant to flight.

Then said the Knight unto the Woman: Loe, I have suffered for thy love many sore Wounds, and have saved thée from Death, wilt thou therefore promise to be my wife; thereto I assent (quoth she) with all my heart, and thereupon I plight thée my troth. When they were thus ensured, then said the Knight as followeth.

Here beside is my Castle, go thither, and abide there till I have provided all things needful for our wedding, for I purpose to make a great feast thereat. My Lord (quoth she) I am ready to fulfil your will: Then went she unto the Castle, whereat she was worthily receiv'd: and the Knight went unto his friends for to bid them to the Marriage. In the mean while came Poncianus the Tyrant to the Knights Castle, and prayed her that he might speak with her. Then came she down from the Castle to him, and this Tyrant subtilly

flattered her, & said: Gentle love, if it please you to consent to me, I shall give you both silver and gold and great riches, and I shall be your servant, & ye my Soveraign. When the Woman heard this, full lightly she was deceived through his flattering language, and soon granted him to be his Wife, and took him to her in the Castle.

Not long after the Knight came home and found the Castle gate shut, and knocked thereat, but long it was ere he might have answer. At the last the woman came and demanded why he knocked at the gate. Then said he to her: O swæt Lady why hast thou so soon changed thy love, let me come in. Nay surely, said she, thou shalt not come in here, for I have here with me my old love which I loved before, remember quoth the Knight, thou gavest me thy troth to be my wife, and how I saved thee from Death; and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds which I have suffered in my body for thy love. And so he uncloathed himself naked all save his hosen, that he might shew his wounds openly. But she would not see them, nor speak more with him but shut fast the gate and went her way. Now when the Knight saw this, he went to the Judge and made his complaint to him, praying him to give him right judgement on the Tyrant and the Woman.

Then

Then the Judge called them both before him, and when they were come, the Knight said thus: my Lord, I ask the benefit of the Law which is this: If a man rescue a woman from ravishing, the rescuer shall marry her if him list, and this woman I delivered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife: and furthermore she gave her faith and troth to marry with me and thereupon we went to my castle, and I have been at great cost against our wedding, and therefore as it semeth to me, she is my Wife by the law.

Then said the Judge to the Tyrant, thou knowest well that this Knight delivered her from thy hand, and for her love hath suffered greivous wounds, and therefore well thou wottest that she is his wife by the Law, if that him list. But after her deliverance with flattering speech thou hast deceived her, therefore I judge thee to be hanged.

Then said the Judge to the Woman, likewise: O Woman, thou knowest how this knight saved thee from Death, and thereupon thou betrothedst him thy faith & troth to be his Wife, first by the Law, and after by faith and troth: this notwithstanding, thou consentest afterward to the Tyrant & broughtest him into the Knights Castle, and didst shut the gate against the Knight, and wouldst not

ſée his wounds which he ſuffered for thy love, and therefore I judge thée to be hanged alſo. And ſo it was done, both the Raviſher and ſhe that was raviſhed, were condemned to Death, wherefore every man praiſed the Judge for his wiſe judgement.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of heaven which ordained a Law, that if the ſoul of man were raviſhed from God, by ſin, the ſaviour of the ſoul ſhould eſpouſe her if him liſt. The woman that was raviſhed betokeneth the ſoul of man, which was raviſhed by the ſin of our forefather Adam, and led out of Paradiſe into the Forreſt of this wretched world by the Tyrant Poncianus, which betokeneth the Devil, and he not onely defiled her, loſing the heritage of Heaven, but alſo he would ſlay her with everlaſting pain. But the Soul cryeth with an high voice, whoſe cry our Lord Jeſus Chriſt heard. This cry was made when Adam cryed after the oyl of mercy: and the Patriarks and Prophets cryed for remedy, ſaying theſe words: O thou higheſt in the Eaſt viſit thou us, &c.

The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt which came from Heaven, and fought with the Tyrant, that is the Devil, and both they

they were ſore wounded: for our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was wounded in the fleſh, and the Devil maimed in his Kingdom: Wherefore the woman that is the ſoul, gave her faith and troth unto Chriſt Jeſus, when ſhe became a Chriſtian, ſaying theſe words; I forſake the Devil and all his Pride, and believe in God the Father Almighty. Then ordained our Lord Jeſus Chriſt a Marriage betwéen him and her with the two ſpecial Sacraments of Baptiſm, & the Lords ſupper, whereof may be made a ſtrong Caſtle againſt ꝑ Devil. Alſo our Lord commanded the ſoul to kéep her ſtill in the Caſtle of Vertue, till he went to provide that was néedful: that is, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt aſcended to Heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of everlaſting joy, whereas ſhe ſhould dwell after ꝑ day of judgement with our Lord God in honour & glory.

But alas in the mean time came the Devil, and beguiled the wretched ſoul by deadly ſin, and ſo entred into the Caſtle of our heart, which ſhould be the Caſtle of God. The Knight Jeſus knocked at ꝑ gate of our heart according to the Scripture, Lo I ſtand at the door and knock, if any man will open that I may enter. But where the Devil is, God doth never enter, except the ſinner will receive him by repentance, which ſéeing our Lord hanging upon the Croſs, that we may

ſée

ſee his bloody woundes which he ſuffered for us; we ſinners ſhould be the rather mindful of his love: For from the crown of his head to the ſole of his feet was left no whole place; therefore ſaith the Prophet Eſay, Behold and ſee if any ſorrow be like to my ſorrow. Therefore he is a wretched man that will not be converted unto his Lord God, but lye ſtill in deadly ſin, wherefore when he is called before the high judge, he ſhall be condemned to everlaſting Death. Therefore ſtudy we to open the Doors of our hearts by fruitful faith in Almighty God, and then without doubt we ſhall obtain everlaſting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jeſus, Amen.

The Argument.

The Body and Soul of man being made by Gods grace the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, do give themſelves to ſerve and pleaſe God in this life, and to love God and their Neighbours according to his laws; and though the body by death ſuffer mortal affliction for a time, yet by faith, hope and charity in Jeſus Chriſt, both body and ſoul ſhall inherit life and joy everlaſting.

The 44. Hiſtory.

IT is read of a certain Roman Emperor which erecting for himſelf a gwdly Monument

ment or Tomb, as the Labourers Digged in the ground of his palace, they found a Coffin of gold bound about with three hoops, and upon the Hoops was engraven these words, I have spent, I have given, I have kept: I have had, I now have lost, I am punished. That which I had I spent, that which I gave I have. When the Emperor saw this, he called together his Nobles and States, and said unto them: My Lords, go and consider among your selves what this inscription meaneth, unto whom the nobles shortly after returned this short answer, saying, the meaning of this inscription is no other but this: There was a certain Emperor your Predecessor, which desired to leave behind him an example to others, that they might follow him in good life and conversation, viz. I have spent my life in judging others righteously, & governing my self according to ye rule of reason; I have given to my souldiers things necessary, unto your maintenance and living, and to every one as to my self, according to their deserts. I have kept in all my works, righteousness, mercy to them that need it, and to workmen their worthy wages; I have had, a liberal and a constant heart to every one that serveth me: I have given riches in their necessity, & loving favour at all times. I have had a hand to tame and subdue enemies, to protect and

defend

defend friends, to punish offenders. I have lost, foolishnesse, the friendship of enemies, and lust or lasciviousnes of the flesh. I am punished, now by Death, because I believed not as I ought to have done, in one God eternal. I am punished, I say alasse, because I cannot redeem my self, but by the merits of Christ Jesus the Saviour of the world. When the Emperor aforesaid heard the meaning of the inscriptions wisely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceased Emperor had lived, he thereby governed himself and his Subjects more providentially, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honour.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every good Christian man or woman, which ought, and is bound to erect and re-edifie a Tomb, that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may perform his wil above all things: and so diggeth in the ground of his heart by contrition and sorrowful repentance for his sins, that he doth finde a golden Coffin, that is a body dead to sin, but his soul garnished with vertues by Gods grace granted to the same, and bound about with three golden Hoops, viz. with Faith, Hope and Charity. What was engraven in the same three Hoops? I have spent: where it may be asked what

what hast thou spent? the good Christian answereth, body and soul in the service of God: if any of you bestow this temporal life in, he shall be assured of great reward, even of life everlasting. The second inscription is, I have kept: what hast thou kept? The good Christian answereth, a contrite and humble heart, and prepared unto God, to do whatsoever his good pleasure was. The third inscription is, I have given: What hast thou given? The good Christian answereth: Love unto God with all my heart, with all my Soul, and with all my minde: and love unto my neighbour, according to the commandement of God. The fourth inscription is, I have had: What hast thou had? The good Christian answereth and saith, surely a wretched life, because I was conceived in sin, and born in iniquity, and also was formed of vile and base matter. Fifthly, what is the inscription, I now have? The good Christian answereth by Baptism, and thereby am made the Souldier of Christ, by Vertues which God gave me in my Baptism: whereas before I was the bond slave of Satan. Sixthly, what is that inscription, I have lost? To this answereth the good Christian, surely the favour of God, by mine own deserts: yet all the sins which I have committed against God, I have by repentance corrected & amended: becau-

repentance is one mean, but Christs merits chiefly & especially cleanseth us from all sin. Seventhly, what is that inscription, I am punished? The good Christian answereth and saith, Because I am afflicted by Death for the offences and sins of my life. Eightly, what is that inscription, I have spent which I had? To this answereth the good Christian saying, I have bestowed all my life time here in works of mercy, by the grace which I received of my Lord Jesus Christ. Ninthly, what is that inscription, That which I gave I have, surely in all my temporal life I gave all my counsel, whole assent and will which I had to be the servant of God, and now it is in the good will and pleasure of God, that I shall remain with him in joys of everlasting life in Heaven: unto the which bring us all. Amen.

FINIS.

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